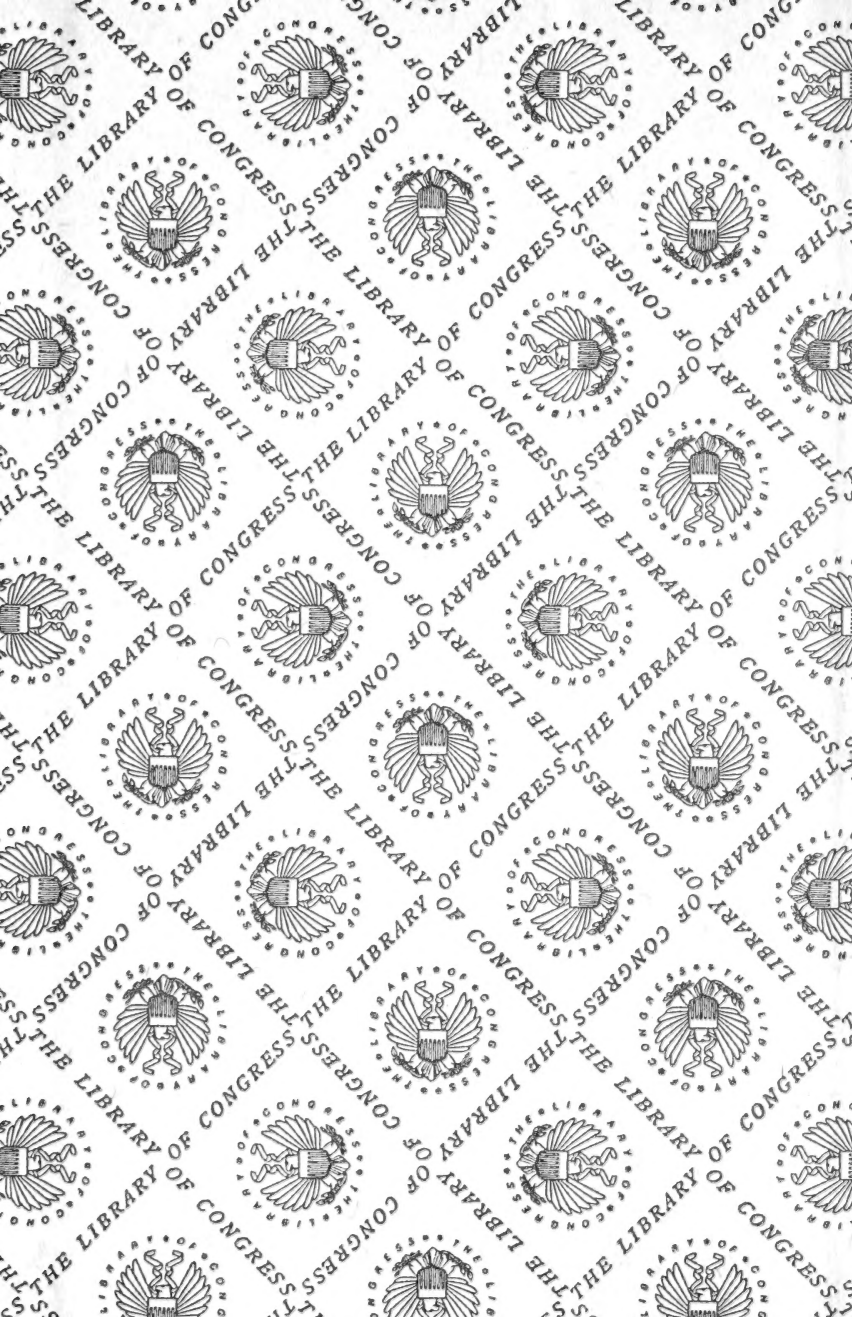
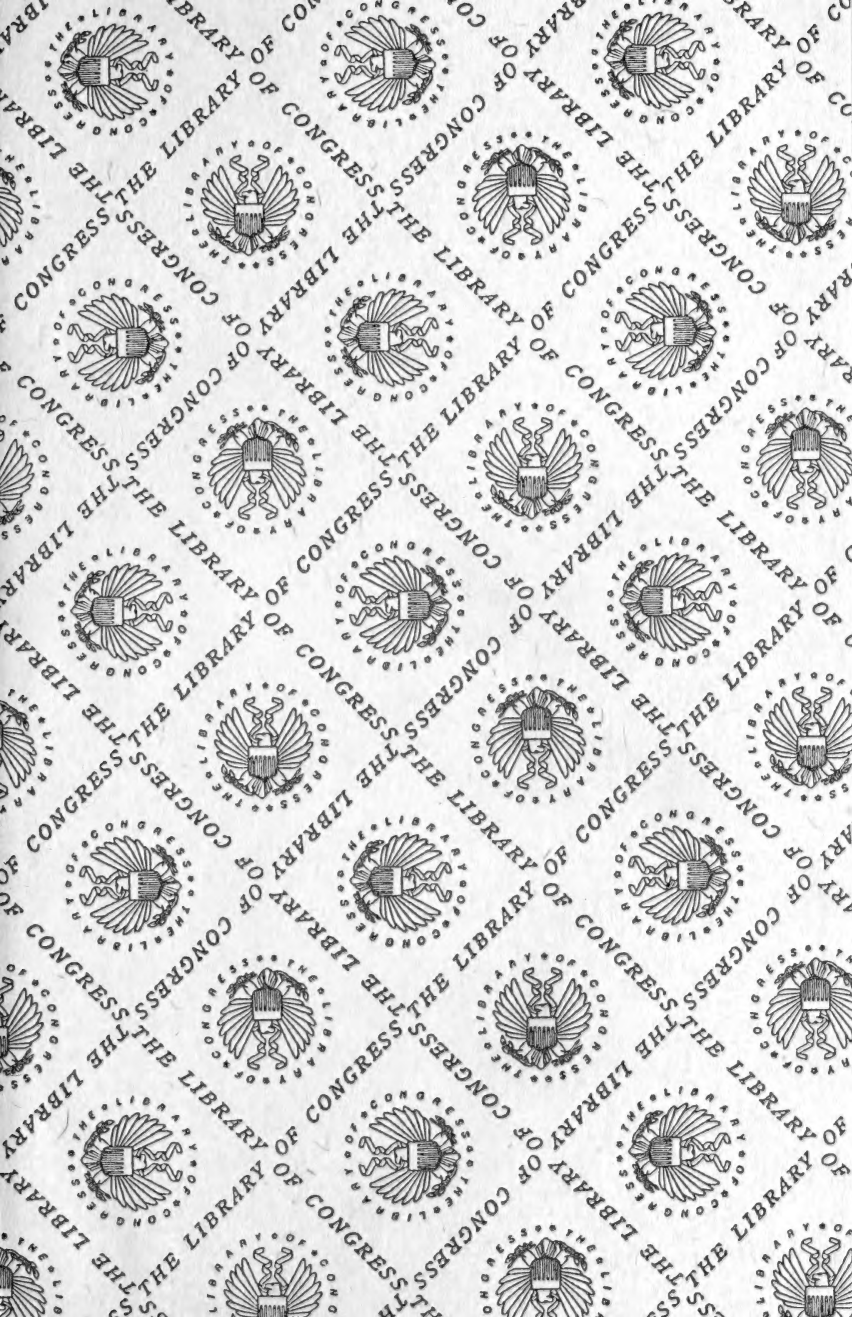


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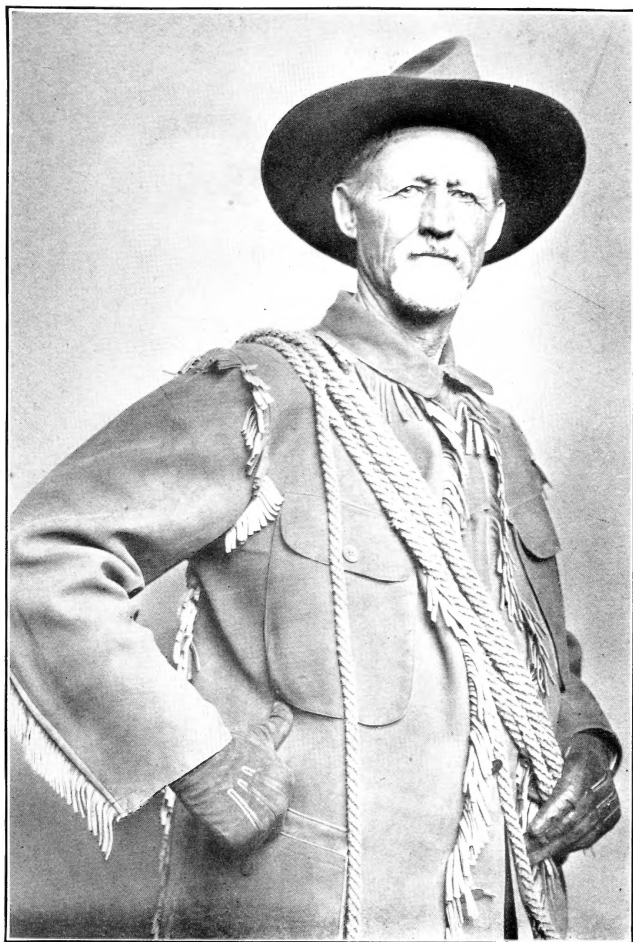


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**LASSOING WILD ANIMALS
IN AFRICA**



COLONEL C. J. JONES (BUFFALO JONES)

LASSOING WILD ANIMALS IN AFRICA

BY

GUY H. SCULL

FIELD MANAGER OF THE BUFFALO JONES
AFRICAN EXPEDITION

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
THEODORE ROOSEVELT

AND A FOREWORD BY
CHARLES S. BIRD

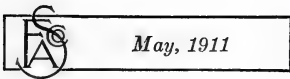


*WITH THIRTY-TWO ILLUSTRATIONS
FROM PHOTOGRAPHS*

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INTRODUCTION

THE expedition of Buffalo Jones to Africa was noteworthy in every way. The feats described by Mr. Scull are true in every detail; and no hunter with the rifle deserves the credit that Mr. Jones and his two cowpuncher comrades, Messrs. Loveless and Means, deserve. Their feats in roping lion, rhino, giraffe, and other animals were extraordinary performances, and showed a cool gallantry and prowess which should rejoice the hearts of all men who have known the West and who have felt that the old-style plainsman, and his more modern representative, the expert cowpuncher, are fit to grapple with any emergency of wild life.

The expedition was singularly lucky in having with it the accomplished nature

I n t r o d u c t i o n

photographer, Mr. Kearton, to make permanent record of what occurred. For cool courage and proficiency in his art there is nothing to choose between Mr. Kearton and any one of the men actively engaged in the work of roping the dangerous wild beasts hunted by the party. The writer of the experiences, Mr. Scull, is a Harvard man who was in my regiment; and it was fortunate that there was with the party some man who could record the experiences with truthful accuracy. No hunting trip more worthy of commemoration ever took place in Africa.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

February 24, 1911.

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FOREWORD

THE expedition of which this is a chronicle centers around the personality of Col. C. J. Jones. It was he who conceived the idea; his boundless enthusiasm and optimism persuaded me that such an expedition was practicable, and his determination, energy, and daring carried it to a successful issue. Without, however, the skill and courage of the two cowboys, Loveless and Means, without the iron nerve of Kear-ton, the photographer, and, above all, without the patience, force, and grit of Scull, the expedition might not have been successful. Two years ago, when Colonel Jones and I were camping on the Kaibab Plateau on the northern rim of the Grand Cañon of Arizona, we were discussing

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big game hunting in British East Africa. Jones was deploring the killing of wild animals. Suddenly he turned to me with the proposal that we both go to Africa and with Western cow ponies lasso and capture the big game of that country. He realized, he said, that no one would believe it possible, but for that reason he was the more anxious to show the world how easy it would be for American cowboys to rope and subdue the fiercest and biggest game.

At the time the proposal seemed quixotic and, in spite of Jones's enthusiasm, evident sincerity, and profound belief in the eventual success of such an expedition, it was treated by the rest of us more or less jocosely. Later, when I learned to know Jones better, and understood his courage, determination, and skill in the face of danger, and his never-failing confidence and alertness, as shown on our

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trip north of the Grand Cañon, I began to have faith in his ability to do what he proposed.

Impossible? That word does not fit Jones. You cannot find it in his vocabulary. When you understand him and know what he has accomplished, you feel confident that anything, however unusual, which he may undertake in the animal world may be possible. Rightly or wrongly he firmly believes that all wild animals, from the elephant down, can be lassoed, captured, and subdued by man if, as he expresses it, "one has courage in his heart and determination in his soul."

He is at his best in the plains, where he is resourceful, daring, and confident, almost reckless, in fact. Yet he understands wild life so well that feats which in another would appear foolhardy seem to be easily and safely done by him.

Foreword

For many years he has devoted much of his life to the study, preservation, and propagation of animal life. Perhaps no one has done more than he to preserve the American buffalo, and most of the remaining herds in this as well as in other countries owe their existence to his energy and work. Rightfully he is called the "preserver of the American bison."

His trip twelve years ago, when he was fifty-five years of age, to the far north, with one companion only, to lasso and capture young musk-oxen, was remarkable and unique. Especially interesting is the story of his adventures during the long winter months in and around the little cabin on Great Slave Lake and his return home with the musk-oxen.

In 1907 Ernest Thompson Seton followed Jones's trail to that cabin and found around it many skeletons of the

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wolves with which Jones and his companion had their fight.

It was my own observation of Jones, however, that convinced me that his proposed African trip might be successful. I shall never forget his lassoing a 200-pound cougar which our dogs had chased up a big spruce tree a thousand feet down the Colorado Cañon. Jones climbed the tree without gun or knife and faced the ugly brute, which at times was not three feet above his head. Deliberately and coolly he threw the noose of the lariat over the head of the animal, which was lashing its tail and raising its ominous paw, seemingly at any second about to strike him, while in a quiet voice, alert and confident, with no trace of fear, he carried on an amusing and running talk with the savage beast. When the cougar came crashing through the limbs to the ground amidst the dogs and men, with nothing to

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hold him save a half-inch rope around his neck, more lively things happened in a second than I could describe in an hour.

The cougar under most situations is a coward, and a cougar hunt with dogs and guns where the game is shot out of a tree is a tame affair — not livelier than a deer or a fox hunt, but to lasso and capture a cougar at bay, fighting for his life (an animal so powerful that when in search of food he will often pull down a horse), is a far different matter. It is keen and dangerous sport, the result always being in doubt from the time the dogs give tongue until the game is roped, tied, and muzzled. In such a hunt there are no dull seconds.

I knew, of course, the chances were that the African trip, absurd and impossible as it seemed to be, might end in failure and ridicule. Jones might be seriously injured and the expedition wrecked.

Foreword

“He is certain to be killed,” a friend said to me.

“Well,” I replied, “what of it? He is sixty-five years old, and I am sure would far rather die fighting on the plains than in his bed at home.”

The expedition started on its long journey, no one, save Jones, perhaps, having much confidence in its success. At last a cablegram came from Nairobi announcing the lassoing and capture of giraffes, cheetah, wart-hog, zebras, and many other animals; and, best of all, it told of a six-hours’ fight and capture of a large rhinoceros, and later, of the lassoing and capture of a full-grown lioness. We were disappointed that the expedition did not have more time at its disposal. Jones wanted to tackle an elephant, which he thought would be easier than a rhino. “An elephant,” he said, “stands high, while a rhino is

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built low and is much harder to overturn.”

However, the difficulty of finding game, the coming of the rainy season, and the fact that the expedition had lasted longer than intended, made it unwise to continue further.

I wish to acknowledge our indebtedness to Mr. Arthur A. Fowler for his assistance in outfitting the expedition in London and Nairobi, and to the photographer, Cherry Kearton, of London, expert operator of the cinematographic machine, which recorded in thousands of film-feet the story of the trip. It is difficult to exaggerate the skill and nerve required to take a moving picture in the midst of a rhino or lion fight, especially as so many conditions of light, atmosphere, and position must be almost perfect in order to get any picture at all.

Our debt is great, also, to Guy H.

F o r e w o r d

Scull, field manager and the writer of this book, who accompanied the expedition purely because of his love of clean and original sport, and whose patience, common sense, and courage helped much to carry the expedition to a successful finish.

CHARLES S. BIRD.

March 1, 1911.

PART ONE



LASSOING WILD ANIMALS IN AFRICA

PART ONE

IT was a special train — loaded to capacity with horses and dogs, camp baggage, moving-picture cameras, cowboys, photographers, and porters; and when it pulled out of the Nairobi station on the way to the “up country” of British East Africa, the period of preparation passed away and

Lassoing Wild Animals

the time of action began. As the faces of the people on the platform glided by the window of the slowly moving carriage there was good-will written on all of them; but also unbelief. There was no doubt as to what they thought of Buffalo Jones's expedition that was setting out to rope and tie and photograph the wild animals of the East African Veldt.

"How are you going to hold a rhino that weighs two tons and a half?"

"What are you going to do when the lion charges?"

Such were the questions asked us by the hunters of the country. They further took pains to explain that a rhino charges like a flash, and that a lion can catch a horse within a hundred yards.

These items of information, however, were well known to Buffalo Jones before the expedition was organized in New

In Africa

York, and his preparations to meet the difficulties had been made accordingly.

Colonel C. J. Jones is tall and spare, with a strong, rugged face and keen blue eyes. During his sixty-five years of life he has roped and tied, often single-handed, every kind of wild animal of consequence to be found in our western country, and his experience with these has led him to believe implicitly that man is the master of all wild beasts.

He has climbed trees after mountain-lions, and with a lasso over a branch has hauled grizzlies up into the air by one hind leg. And once he set out alone to journey over a country that no white man had ever traveled before, to reach the land of the musk-ox on the border of the Arctic Circle. The story is told of how he met a trapper on the way, and how these two, in the face of the hostility of all the Indian tribes, the wolves,

Lassoing Wild Animals

and the cold of the northern winter, eventually came to the musk-ox and captured five calves. Then, deserted by their Indian guide, they started to return with their prizes, got lost in the wilderness, and fought the wolves till their cartridges ran out. And when at last they reached safety and fell asleep, exhausted, the Indians, obeying the laws of their religion, stole upon them in the night and killed the calves.

But the success he had achieved with the mountain lions of the Southwest, the musk-ox of the North, and the grizzly bears of the Rockies was not enough. For twenty years it had been the one ambition of his life to take an outfit to British East Africa to try his hand with the more ferocious big game of that country. But in his Western experience Colonel Jones had learned something else besides the mastery of man

In Africa

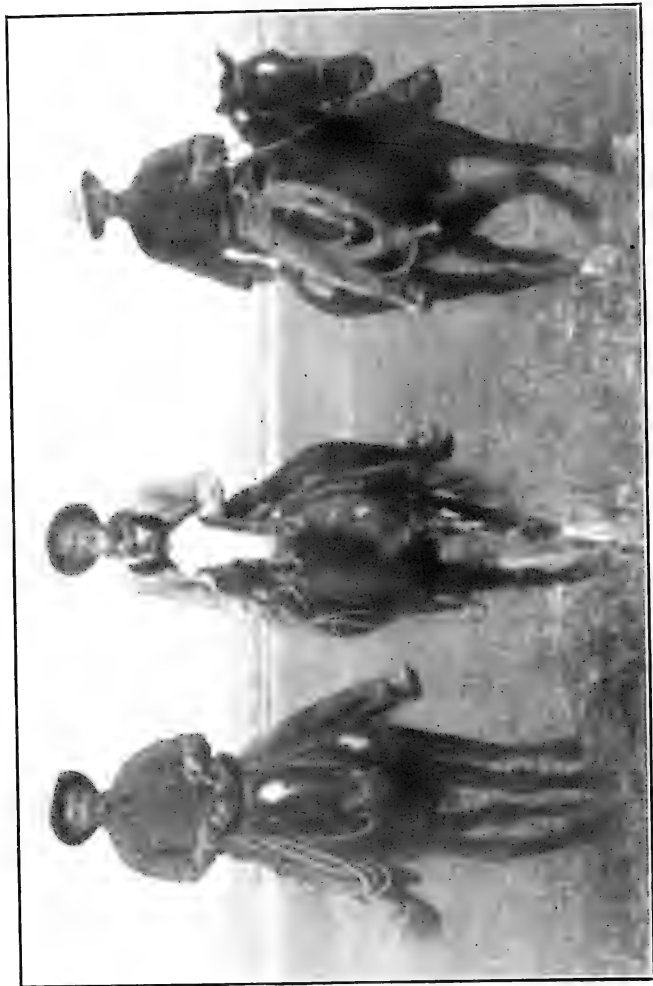
over beast. Precisely how an American cowboy was going to hold a rhinoceros that weighed two tons and a half was purely a matter of speculation. Yet of one thing the Colonel was certain — the experiment would result in a moving picture that would be well worth the taking. For this reason what afterward came to be known as the “picture department” was added to the make-up of the expedition.

The preparations extended over a considerable length of time and were carried on in various places. Unquestionably the most important part of the outfit was the horses. It was absolutely essential that they should be Western cowponies, fast, well trained, and reliable in every way. The Colonel, who best of all could foresee the nature of the work they would have to do, selected them himself, ten in all, from the ranches of

Lassoing Wild Animals

New Mexico, and shipped them to New York. The American dogs to be used for trailing were likewise chosen by the Colonel. Some of them belonged to him personally, and had been thoroughly tried out. The rest had reputations of their own. Of the two cowboys who were to act as his assistants, Marshall Loveless had worked with the Colonel before and knew his methods, and Ambrose Means came highly recommended for skill and daring from one of the largest ranch owners in the West.

When, at the last moment, the writer of these articles was introduced to the expedition in the capacity of acting field manager, the preparations were well under way. The horses and dogs had been already shipped, *en route* to Africa, in charge of the cowboys, and the date of our sailing for London had been fixed for the following day.



THE COLONEL AND HIS TWO COWBOYS, LOVELESS AND MEANS

In Africa

The meeting was held at a luncheon in the Railroad Club, in New York. There were present Colonel Jones, Mr. F. W. Bird, son of Charles S. Bird, who financed the expedition, Mr. W. G. Sewall, of the Boma Trading Company of Nairobi, and myself. After certain matters of business had been disposed of, the talk at the luncheon table drifted to the probabilities and possibilities of success; to lions, rhinos, elands, and cheetahs; to cowboys, horses, and dogs. But the Colonel would hear of no possibilities, or even probabilities, of failure. He was peculiarly insistent upon this point. And when the hour of the business man's lunch time came to an end, and the room began to empty, Mr. Sewall said to me across the corner of the table:

“Of course, every one in Nairobi will think all of you either fakers or crazy. I know you're no fakers. I don't know

Lassoing Wild Animals

whether you're crazy or not. But there is one thing in your favor: The Colonel's unshaken belief that the thing can be done will probably pull it through."

On our arrival in London, about the middle of January of this year, the work of preparation was continued at once. Outside of the minor details of the outfit, such as personal equipment, saddlery, medicines, bandages, and so forth, the first matter to receive attention was the organization of the picture department. Mr. Cherry Kearton was sought to take charge of this branch of the expedition. Kearton — a powerfully built Yorkshireman — is an experienced cinematograph photographer and a naturalist of no small reputation. He had taken moving pictures in Africa before, and so he knew the climatic conditions there — the heat radiation and the different intensities of light. He also knew the animals the

In Africa

Colonel was going to rope. But besides being a cinematograph expert and a naturalist, he was also a sportsman.

When Kearton learned of the nature of the undertaking, he was skeptical. He had no more than a slight acquaintance with the Colonel then, and only a vague hearsay knowledge of what the American cowboy could do. Evidently his mind was divided by the dictates of common sense and the sporting instinct. On many occasions during this time he questioned the feasibility of the experiment in the light of what he knew of the African beasts. The agreement, in documentary form, was spread out on the table in the Boma Trading Company's London office when he finally wanted to know how in Heaven's name we thought this thing could be done.

"We'll do it," the Colonel said quietly. That was all.

Lassoing Wild Animals

“Well, there’s a picture in it, any way,” said Kearton, and signed the papers.

With his assistant, David Gobbet, two cinematograph machines and tripods, hand cameras and developing apparatus, he set sail immediately for Africa, leaving an order for thirty thousand feet of film to be divided between two manufacturers and to be forwarded as soon as possible.

In the meantime Colonel Jones was hard at work collecting a rather unusual assortment of articles. The experience of a lifetime enabled him to foresee what kind of materials were absolutely necessary and what kind might prove useful on the present expedition. Naturally the articles required were not usually in stock, but the London shopkeeper is proverbially obliging and imperturbable.

One rainy morning the Colonel walked

I n A f r i c a

into a hardware store and asked to see some handcuffs. A pair was shown him.

“Not large enough,” said the Colonel.

“How large would you want them, sir?”

“Twice that size.”

“May I ask for what purpose you require them, sir?”

“For lions,” said the Colonel.

“Precisely, handcuffs for lions; yes, you need large ones. I am afraid I have none in stock just now, but I can have them made for you within a few days.”

It was the same with almost everything the Colonel wanted to purchase; everything had to be made especially for him after his own description — handcuffs, collars, and belts, chains, branding-irons, a block and fall, muzzles of different sizes, corkscrew picket-pins for holding the turn of a rope, and a

Lassoing Wild Animals

nondescript article shaped like a huge pair of tongs, for which I feel sure there is no name in any trade, but which looked to be a handy implement for clamping the jaws of a beast. To have these things made according to specifications took time and an endless amount of running about. Besides, there was the more ordinary part of the equipment to procure: English dogs, both fox-hounds and terriers, horse-blankets, extra ropes, horseshoes, and so on. When the last of the expedition sailed from Southampton there were forty-eight pieces of baggage on the list.

This last contingent reached Nairobi at noon on March 3, and for the first time then all the members of the expedition met together. Loveless proved to be a man a little below the medium height; he held himself very erect, walked with quick, energetic steps, and wore a

In Africa

blond mustache. He made polite inquiries as to our voyage out, commented on the hot weather, and fully explained the condition of the horses and dogs. Means was taller. He carried his head slightly forward and wore his black hair brushed low down over his forehead. He stood slumped on one hip, so that one shoulder also was lower than the other.

“Please’ to meet you,” he said.

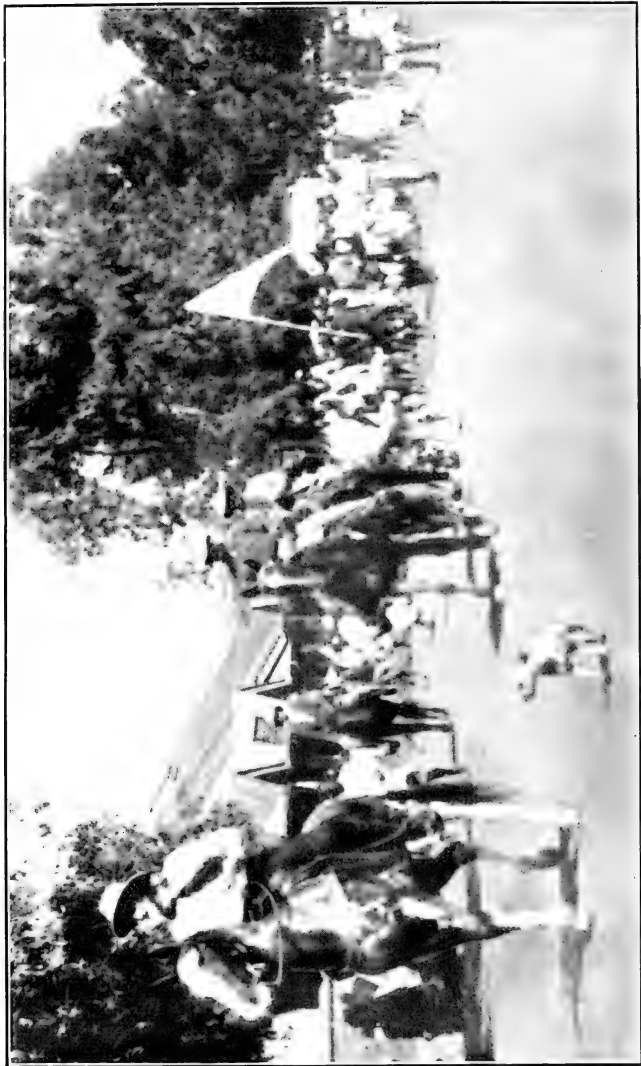
On our arrival at Nairobi the first matter to be decided was the district to be worked. The choice lay between the Sotik and the Kapeti Plains. According to the usual batch of contradictory stories in such cases, the game was said to be equally plentiful, or equally scarce, in both districts. Both had been shot over considerably of late, and, anyhow, no one could really tell us where the most game was to be found;

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because, as one informant explained, the game everywhere shifted so frequently and so fast. But the Sotik and the country approaching it — the Kedong and Rift valleys, and the Mau — were reported to be more or less free from ticks, and, as the health of the horses was of the gravest importance to us, we determined to work this district first.

The Colonel and his two cowboys, Loveless and Means, were ready to start at once. Eight out of the ten horses were in fine condition. With but one exception, the dogs had come through safely though all were suffering somewhat from distemper. It was concluded, however, that they would recover just as rapidly in the open country as they would in Nairobi.

Kearton and Gobbet were ready. Kearton had built a dark room in Nairobi, because his earlier experience had



TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION THROUGH THE MAIN STREET OF NAIROBI

I n A f r i c a

taught him that the pictures could not be developed with any degree of satisfaction in the field. His four special porters to 'carry the cameras and tripods — porters he had trained on previous *safaris* — were only waiting for the word to move. Mr. Ray Ulyate, the white hunter to the expedition, had already gone to Kijabe to prepare his ox-wagons against our coming, and the Boma Trading Company had engaged a special train to leave Nairobi on the fifth.

On the morning of that day we held the customary procession of an outgoing *safari* down the main street of Nairobi to the waiting train. The Colonel rode first, with the assorted pack of dogs at his horse's heels. Then came the cowboys with the led horses; then the picture department; then the long single line of black porters, bringing up the

Lassoing Wild Animals

rear. Above the loads on the porters' heads two flags flashed their colors in the sunlight — the stars and stripes, and the house flag of the company, with the white buffalo skull against the red background, and underneath the motto, *Sapiens qui vigilat*.

The night had already fallen black and cold when the special train crested the top of the divide and coasted down grade into Kijabe. The most imposing structure in the place is the railroad station, with its red wooden building propped up on piles, its tin guest-house alongside, and the neat gravel platform growing a clump of trees. The rest of Kijabe is composed of four other houses, the goods-shed, an open-faced Indian booth, the post-office, and the water-tank. Ulyate met us with a lantern, for the station lights are dim, and we detrained in the face of the high wind that always blows

— In Africa

there from sunset to dawn, and picketed the horses among the trees of the station platform. Because a large part of the revenue of the country is derived from the visiting hunters, a *safari* is accorded privileges out of the ordinary. So, as a matter of course, we took possession of the station and camped in the tin guest-house for the night.

The morning came clear and hot and still. The railroad at Kijabe runs along the face of the hills, so that the land drops down abruptly to the plains below, and you can look away for miles over the Kedong and Rift valleys, with the two sentinel extinct volcanoes rising black against the heat-blurred sky.

The floors of the valleys are laid with volcanic ash. But on first appearances the land looks much the same as the regulation veldt or certain parts of our own Western plains. It is only by the fine-

Lassoing Wild Animals

ness of the dust that hangs about the horses' feet, and the peculiar quality of the thirst that dries in the throat, that you know this is no ordinary soil.

The sun was high in the heavens before we finally started from Kijabe and descended the rough road to the level ground, with the brakes on the ox-wagons squealing harshly and the horses treading silently in the dust.

We had planned to camp at Sewell's Farm that night. It was only about four hours away, but a short trek the first day is always a good rule to follow. It gives every one a chance, so to speak, to shake down well into the saddle. We had gone but a short distance, however, when one thing became strikingly apparent: Gobbet did not know how to ride! He was mounted on a white African pony that we had found it necessary to add to our string. The

In Africa

pony was stolid, lazy, and easy-gaited, but Gobbet's unfamiliar attitude toward his mount was unmistakable.

Now it is a delicate matter in any country to broach the question of a man's horsemanship, but presently Gobbet introduced the subject of his own accord.

"Of course I can't ride a horse," he said. "Have never been on one before. When Mr. Kearton spoke to me about coming out here with him, he just asked me if I could ride, and I told him surely I could ride — but I didn't tell him I meant a bicycle."

After all, the matter was of no great importance. Gobbet was young and thin and active, with sharp black eyes, and the work that lay ahead of us would probably teach him to ride in short order — and it did.

We had little expectation of finding

Lassoing Wild Animals

either a lion or a rhino on that first day's trip. We were traveling on a regular road, making a kind of initial march. The fringe of scrub at the beginning of the valley had been left behind some three or four miles when Ulyate suddenly reined in his horse and pointed to three black dots on the veldt about half a mile away.

The black dots proved to be only wart-hogs, but we wanted them, and, so long as there was little chance of our finding any of the more important species of game, we took the opportunity that offered. The Colonel and the two cowboys tightened their cinches and then rode out to the westward to round up the beasts.

"Drive 'em back to us," Kearton called after them, and Means waved his hand by way of answer.

Behind us the line of porters was

THE ROPE CAUGHT THE WARTHOG FAIRLY AROUND THE NECK AND FORELEGS





IT WAS NECESSARY TO ROPE HIM AGAIN BY THE HEELS

In Africa

coming up along the road. They were straggling badly, broken up into little sections of threes and fours, so that the last of them were not yet in sight. Gobbet was sent back to hurry forward the four special porters with the cameras, and when these finally arrived upon the scene, their faces covered with dust and sweat, the horsemen had dwindled to dots only a little larger than the hogs themselves.

Kearton placed the cameras a few yards apart, and there we waited, watching the distant specks.

Two of the riders disappeared into a far patch of scrub. The third began swinging to the southward. His horse was galloping after something we could not see.

In the meantime the *safari* was coming up, and as each section arrived it was halted, and the porters put down

Lassoing Wild Animals

their loads and sat on them. Some of them turned their backs upon the scene in total indifference as to what was coming next; others regarded the cameras with expressions of mild curiosity.

Little by little the third horseman had swung round so that he was headed due east, riding straight at us. Rapidly the speck grew larger, and the two other riders came out of the scrub and joined the chase.

Nearer and nearer they came, with the dust cloud swirling behind them. Gobbet began turning the handle of his camera, and the whir of the machine sounded loud in the stillness. One or two of the porters jumped to their feet and pointed. Kearton waited.

"I hope they won't come straight into the lens," he said. "If they do, it won't make a good picture. They ought to come at an angle. So," he explained,

In Africa

placing his hand obliquely to the line of focus. Then he bent over, laid his eye to the gun-sight of the machine, and likewise began turning.

The thunder of the chase could be heard now, and we could see that it was Loveless leading, on his black, with Means and the Colonel close behind and the wart-hog some forty yards ahead. The beast was running strong. His huge snout was thrust forward, and his up-turned tusks gleamed in the sunlight. But gradually the black horse gained on him, and Loveless loosened the rope from his saddle and began swinging the long noose round and round his head.

On came the wart-hog, straight for Kearton's camera.

Kearton straightened up above the machine and waved his helmet frantically.

"Give over, give over!" he shouted.

Lassoing Wild Animals

“You’re driving him right into the picture. It’s no good. Give over!”

The chase never swerved an inch, and Kearton bent to his work again, cursing in well-selected periods.

The next moment the hog drove past him. At the same instant Loveless threw his rope and caught the beast by one hind leg. The black horse stopped, fore feet planted firmly, and the dust cloud swept across and hid the scene.

When the dust cleared away, the hog was lying across the road, blowing comfortably, with the rope leading from his hind leg to the horn of Loveless’s saddle. Loveless laughed.

“There’s the first one for you,” he said. “And my, can’t he run!”

Gobbet, however, was indignant. “It’s no use,” he complained. “To bring an object that way straight into the lens is

BEFORE RELEASING THE WARTHOG WE POSED HIM FOR HIS PICTURE





THE WARTHOG NEARLY RIPS UP THE HORSE'S LEGS

In Africa

against the first principles of cinematography. It's no use, I tell you."

Means sat half slumped in his saddle, with his reeking horse panting heavily.

"Well, well, well," he finally drawled. "And didn't Mr. Pig come a-bending across that prairie? He most certainly come a-bending."

The porters gathered around and looked long at the beast; some of them spoke a few words in low tones, and the others nodded their heads and smiled.

Sometimes a wart-hog will act nasty, and his lower tusks are sharp as razors; but when this one was released he walked out of the circle of grinning natives, slowly, quietly, and apparently thoroughly disgusted.

At Sewell's Farm there is a pan of water made by a dam across an almost waterless brook, and alongside of this pan we pitched our camp. When the sun

Lassoing Wild Animals

set, the high wind rose again, whirling up the dust in heavy clouds and sending the sparks from the fire scurrying over the ground. But the Kedong Valley wind is more or less a phenomenon of the country. You can count upon it absolutely for every one of its disagreeable qualities. I think the citizens of Africa are a little proud of it.

There was now a fair chance that on our way into the Rift Valley we should flush one or another of the larger animals. Preparations for such a contingency were accordingly made before starting from Sewell's Farm. Canteens and iron drums were filled with water, because the next camp would be a dry one. The cinematograph, cameras, and all the extra boxes had been loaded with films the evening before, and the four special camera porters were given strict orders to keep well up with the advance

In Africa

of the *safari*. The lion-taming outfit — the tongs, muzzles, chains, and collars — was stowed on the first wagon, on top of the load, where it could be got at readily in case of need. The Colonel rode ahead, with the two cowboys close behind, all three ropers mounted on their best horses—the Colonel on “the paint,” Loveless on his black, and Means on the big-boned bay. Every member of the party was especially cautioned to keep a sharp lookout on both sides of the road.

Just as the day before, the morning came hot and still, and for hour after hour the straggling *safari* crawled slowly over the long waves of the undulating veldt. The road was a wagon track always vanishing in front toward the head of the valley. The land lay silent beneath the glaring sunlight.

We outspanned at noon for an hour.

Lassoing Wild Animals

Over the country here grew small, scattered thorn trees, thick with thorns but with scarcely any leaves, so that the shade beneath them was thin and could shelter no more than one horse. The water in the canteens, cold at the start, had become warm now.

When we mounted again, the sweat had dried on the horses, and the boots felt stiff on our feet. The line of the road still stretched away its interminable length until it disappeared in the distance.

And then, as we crawled sleepily ahead over the rises, the Colonel was the first to notice the lion spoor in the dust.

With sudden animation the *safari* awoke from the lethargy of the hot, monotonous march. The spoor was judged to be at least four hours old, so there was no use putting the dogs on it. Then presently it disappeared. On the



DRIVING THE ELAND TOWARDS THE CAMERAS

In Africa

dead grass of the bordering veldt there was nothing to show which way the lion had gone. But there was a chance — a small one, yet still a chance — that the beast was lying up near by in the shade of a thorn tree. So all the horsemen spread out over the veldt to obtain a wider scope of vision, and for mile after mile the company moved forward, sweeping the immediate country.

Proceeding in this manner through the afternoon, we eventually crested a slightly higher rise and looked down into a shallow valley that was greener than the rest of the veldt. A few full-sized trees were growing in the bottom, and there were a number of outcroppings of rock. Large herds of antelope were grazing there.

The Colonel called a halt.

“There is no lion anywhere hereabouts,” he said, “because the game are

Lassoing Wild Animals

grazing peacefully. But there is a bunch of eland yonder. We might as well round them up while the light lasts.”

The plan of operation was quickly made. The cameras were stationed about a mile to the southeast, partly concealed by the bole of a tree, and the bunch of eland were skilfully rounded up and a good specimen was singled out.

Everything was working to perfection. The three horsemen drove the eland toward the cameras — not directly at them, but a little to one side, at an angle, as Kearton wanted it done. At the proper moment Loveless roped the animal by the forelegs and neck, and threw it down. Loveless jumped from his horse and was running forward to tie the prize when something — the smell of the strange beast, perhaps — started the black horse bucking. With the rope made fast to the saddle and the eland



THE SMELL OF THE STRANGE BEAST STARTS THE BLACK HORSE BUCKING



WITH ROPE FAST TO SADDLE, THE BLACK CAREERED AROUND THE ELAND

In Africa

acting as a pivot, the black went careering round and round. Both the Colonel and Means tried to rope him, and missed, and finally Loveless, on foot, caught him by the dangling reins.

Of course such a thing might have been readily foreseen, but somehow it came as a surprise and opened up grave possibilities. That night in camp at "Rugged Rocks" we were gathered about the cook's fire for the warmth it gave, when the Colonel spoke of the affair.

"Everything was going great till that horse started bucking," the Colonel remarked. "We've got to teach our horses not to mind the smell of these strange animals out here. We've got to be able to depend absolutely on our horses. Of course that eland wasn't dangerous. But when we tackle something else and a horse acts that way, it might be bad."

But Gobbet said it was good action,

Lassoing Wild Animals

anyway, and would look fine when thrown on the screen.

March 8 was a day of disappointments. Between sunrise and sunset we traveled fifteen miles to the Wangai River and hunted in turn a pair of lions, a cheetah, and a rhinoceros — and lost them all. Two circumstances were held accountable: one was the necessity of getting the horses to water, and the other was the fact that it was just a bad luck day all through.

We came upon the lions early in the morning, close to the base of the southern volcano. This particular pair of lions must have been shot over at one time or another, for they did not wait to satisfy any curiosity as to our intentions, but fled at once for the safety of the mountain. Although we gave chase immediately, their lead was so great, and the distance to the mountains so

In Africa

short, that they were soon lost to us in the gullies and crevices of the foothills.

It was while we were trying to pick up the lost trail of the lions that we flushed a cheetah out of one of the *dongas*.¹ It broke away along the foothills, and finally stopped at bay in a district where the "going" was so bad for the horses that we had to give up the attempt.

With the rhinoceros we had scarcely any chance whatsoever. The Colonel, who was scouting the country to the northward of the line of march, caught a glimpse of the beast in the adjacent valley. By the time he had come back to get us and we had ridden in pursuit, the rhino had disappeared.

We found his trail leading still farther to the northward, and dismounted and looked down at it in silence. No comments were made. No comments were

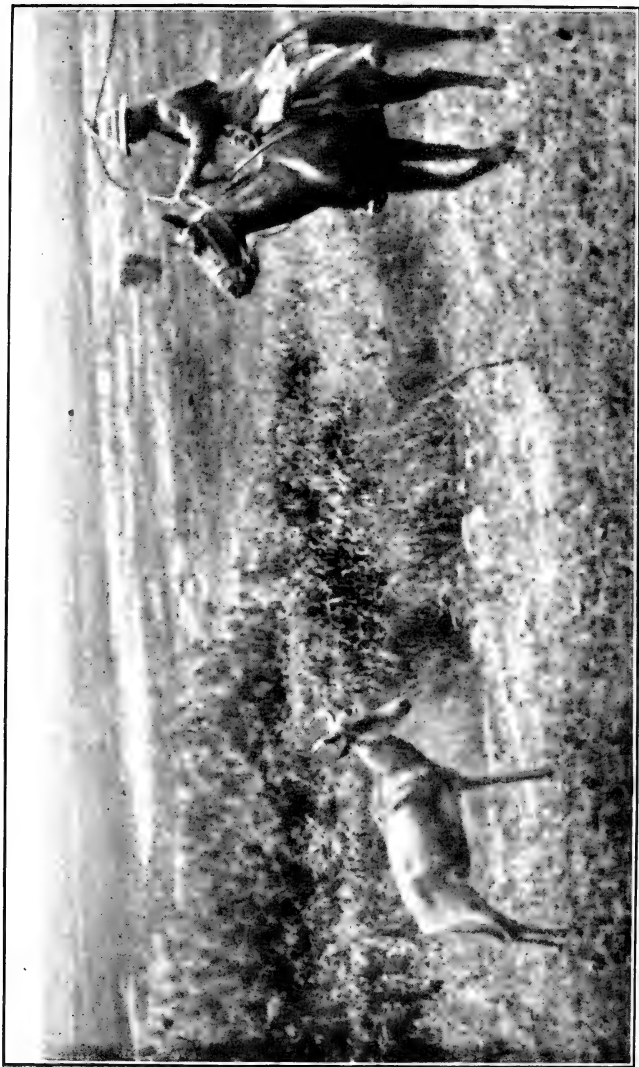
¹ *Donga*, a gully.

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necessary. Every one knew that for lack of water the horses were too done up to follow.

Means had dismounted a little to one side of the group, and for a while he stood there with his arms resting on his saddle, gazing back over the way we had come. Presently he remarked to the world at large: "Excitement has certainly been runnin' high all day." We mounted then; and, instead of hunting the rhino farther, we rode the jaded horses slowly into camp and put a proper finish to a bad luck day by holding a consultation.

The Wangai River is no river at all; merely a small spring in the shadow of the range that crosses the head of the valley. But the spring could supply sufficient water for all our needs. Also, the problem of transportation demanded that Ulyate should return to Kijabe and bring up another wagon with supplies



ROPING A HARTEBEEST IN THE OPEN

In Africa

before the journey over the Mau into the Sotik could be undertaken. Then, too, here in the Rift Valley we had seen both lion and rhino, and there was always the chance of finding them again. The consultation resulted in the decision to make a permanent camp here and hunt the neighboring country until Ulyate should return.

For the succeeding three days the Colonel laid out a plan of campaign; simple, but effective, and limited only by the necessity of keeping within reasonable distance of the water. The plan consisted of a series of drives; one in a northeasterly, one in an easterly, and one in a southeasterly direction. By this means we would cover in turn all territory at the head of the valley.

The Colonel was anxious to try again for the rhino he had seen on the march the day before, and for this reason the

Lassoing Wild Animals

drive to the northeast was inaugurated first. Every member of the expedition took part in these drives. The Colonel and the writer at one end, and the two cowboys at the other, occupied the extreme positions. Between the right and left wings stretched a long line of porters, under the command of two *escaris*, and with Kearton and Gobbet in the center with the cameras. The dogs on leash and the *saises* carrying water for the horses brought up the rear. When finally formed, the line of the drive extended approximately five miles, and the cameras and the dogs were so placed that they could be brought to either end of the line with the utmost despatch. Two shots fired in quick succession would be the signal to gather.

That first day's drive brought little success. To begin with, we were late in starting, so that the sun had already

In Africa

risen before we moved out of camp; and besides, the porters were new at that kind of work and had to be halted and reformed many times before they understood what was wanted.

The land across which we were driving lay at the very edge of the valley, and was consequently somewhat broken into small hills and hollows. By the time we came to the old rhino trail, the day was well advanced. But no fresh tracks were to be found up and down the entire length of the hollow, nor was anything to be seen of the beast from the next hill to the northward, which we climbed to search the country ahead. There was only a large herd of hartebeests grazing on the plains below.

The Colonel retreated half-way down the hill and fired two shots from his revolver. Somewhere beyond our range of vision we heard the two shots repeated,

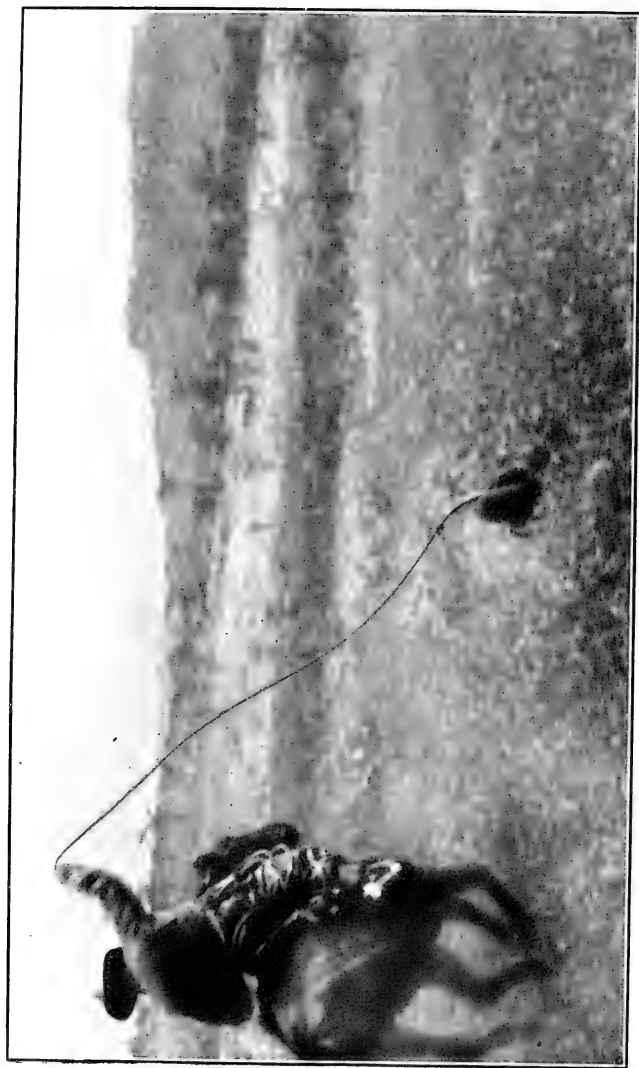
Lassoing Wild Animals

and at the end of a little more than half an hour all the members of the drive were gathered on the hillside below the crest.

Then the Colonel explained the reason for his signal. The rhino was not there. We might still find him, and we might not. The chances were now that we should not. He had probably left the country for good and was already miles away. In the meanwhile a good opportunity offered for rounding up the herd of hartebeests in the plain below and driving them up the hillside to the cameras.

On top of the hill was a small clearing, the edges of which were fringed with scrub. While the Colonel and the cowboys maneuvered to circle the herd, Kearton placed the cameras in the clearing, with the northern line of scrub as a background for the intended picture.

For a long time there was silence.



ROPING A SERVAL CAT—A DIFFICULT TASK, AS THIS ANIMAL TRAVELS CLOSE TO THE GROUND

In Africa

Then suddenly the scrub sprang into life, and the next instant the herd dashed into the clearing in a cloud of dust that was pierced by a hundred startled eyes and tossing horns. At the sight of the cameras the herd broke and scattered in every direction; but the horsemen, pressing them close, roped one in the open, and held him to have his picture taken, and then let him go.

On the second drive, over the lowland to the east, the porters worked better; but, although we covered a far greater territory, the total result was the roping and photographing of a serval-cat that we flushed on the way back to camp.

The third drive carried us well out toward the southern volcano where we had seen the lions on the march from Rugged Rocks, but this time there was no trace of them anywhere in the land. Means, however, found a cheetah, and

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the two faint reports of his signal brought us together on the run.

We came upon Means seated on his horse in a bit of the veldt that was covered all over with tufts of rank grass, so that it looked like a swamp that had been dry for ages. Near by ran a small shallow *donga*.

When the rest of us rode up to him, he merely pointed at one of the tufts of grass behind which the cheetah lay crouched.

There followed a brief delay, while a plan of maneuver was made and expounded, while the tripods were set up, the cameras screwed on, and the ropers moved out to their appointed places.

Then all at once the cheetah started, and, instead of breaking away, as we had calculated he would, he doubled on his tracks and made for the shelter of the *donga*. It was a quick, sharp race

In Africa

— and the cheetah won. He hid in the scrub at the bottom of the ditch. The native porters collected there and complacently regarded the scene, and the members of the drive ranged themselves on either bank and offered innumerable suggestions as to what had better be done next.

But in the midst of it all the Colonel put an emphatic end to the discussion. He rode into the *donga* with his rope swinging free, and when the cheetah failed to spring at him, he dropped the noose over the animal's head, and dragged him out on to the open veldt, where his picture could be properly taken.

The black porters looking on commenced speaking in low tones in their native tongue, and nodded and grinned at each other as they had done before. But this time Mac was among them.

Lassoing Wild Animals

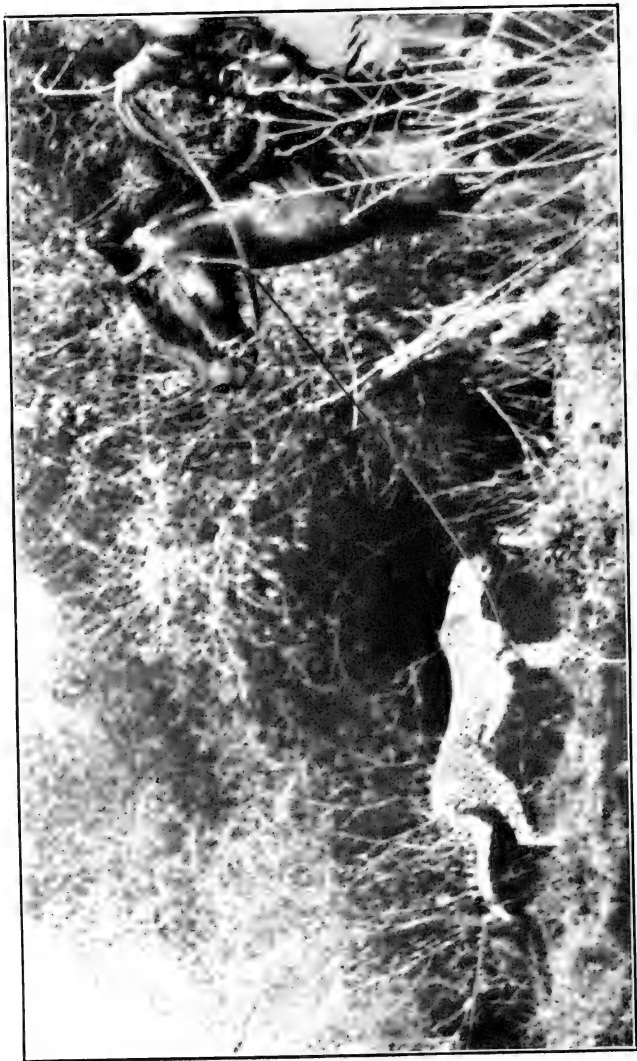
Mac was Kearton's tent-boy. He originally came from Somaliland and spoke English. He was called upon to explain what the porters said.

"Please," he began. "They are very bad men, these people, but don't be sorry. They say — they say that, of course, the white gentlemen are able to do what they want to do, but just the same they are all crazy."

That night we held our second consultation. Ulyate had returned from Kijabe with the extra wagon-load of supplies, which placed us in a position to move again immediately. The question now arose as to whether it would be best to remain where we were a few days longer to gain more experience, or to trek at once over the Mau, with a chance at giraffe on the way, and so on into the Sotik country, with its alluring promises of both rhino and lion.



"DROPPED THE NOOSE OVER THE CHEETAH'S HEAD AND DRAGGED HIM OUT ON TO THE OPEN VELD"



THE CHEETAH, IN THE NOOSE, POSING FOR HIS PHOTOGRAPH

In Africa

By this time we had hunted the Rift Valley thoroughly. During the seven days since we had left Kijabe, the expedition had roped and photographed a cheetah, a serval-cat, a hartebeest, an eland, and a wart-hog. Although we had been given no opportunity yet to find out how we were going to hold a rhino or what we would do when the lion charged, still, in addition to our success with the lesser animals, we had acquired something else of value. All the members of the expedition had learned to work well together—in all the usual emergencies each man knew what was expected of him and could likewise make a ready guess as to what the others intended doing. Thus, in spite of the fact that on an expedition of this kind it is the unexpected that always happens, our experience only added to our confidence that when we eventually encoun-

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tered one of the larger beasts we should get him.

The consultation ended with the unanimous decision to start for the Sotik at dawn.



THE COLONEL HANDLING THE CHEETAH

PART TWO

PART TWO

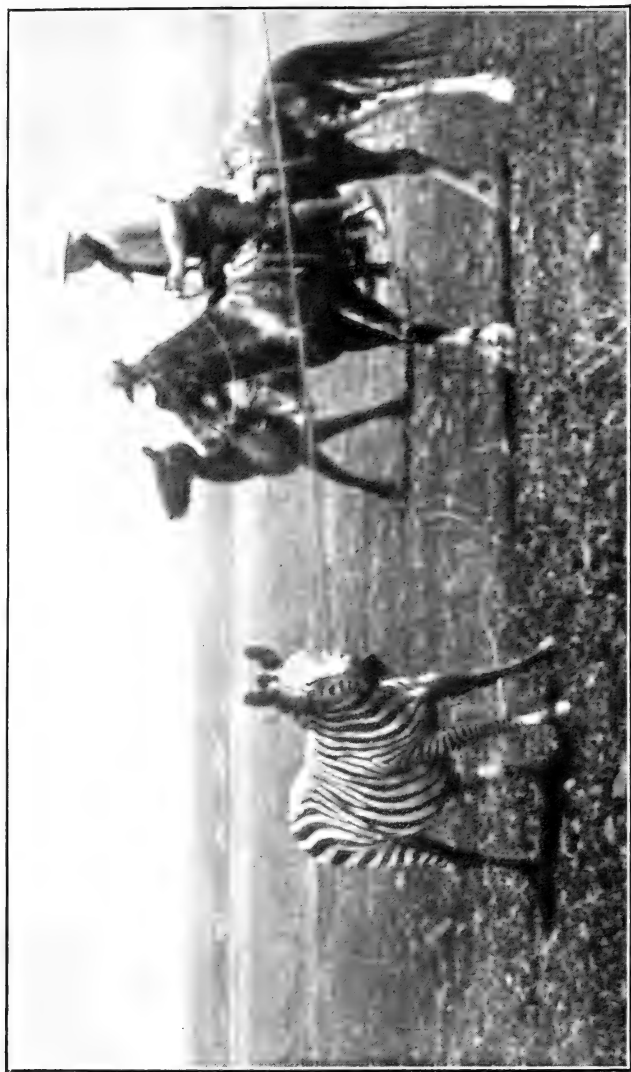
SOMEHOW everything seemed to happen on moving day with the Buffalo Jones Expedition in East Africa. Exactly why this should have been it is impossible to tell. Perhaps the reason may be found in the fact that a considerable part of our time was occupied in moving. No doubt the circumstance could be traced to some such perfectly reasonable cause. But we chose to look upon it otherwise.

When an outfit like ours has been working for a while in the open country — especially when the undertaking has no precedent and the outcome is decidedly uncertain — the little happenings of each day gradually grow to have a peculiar significance of their own, and finally a

Lassoing Wild Animals

brand-new set of superstitions is formed and half-jokingly believed in by every one concerned. In this way an expedition comes to be regarded as lucky or unlucky, or lucky on certain days, or at certain hours of the day, or at certain periods of the moon. The wide reaches of the African veldt have something to do with it, perhaps.

These superstitions are temporary, local, and often purely personal affairs. Means, being a cowboy, believed that when he rode his big-boned bay the drive would be successful. The native dogboy insisted that when the long-eared bloodhound and the little white terrier were coupled together on the march, the rest of the pack would come through without mishap. Loveless swore by a particular piece of rope, and Mac — which is short for Mohammed — discovered propitious omens on every conceivable occasion.



A ZEBRA SAFELY ROPED

In Africa

It was on the first day's march into the Kedong Valley that we had roped the wart-hog. On the journey from Sewell's Farm to Rugged Rocks we had rounded up and photographed the eland. Again, it was on the trek of March 8 to the Wangai River that we had caught our only glimpses of rhinoceros and lion — faint chances of making a capture, but still chances, and better than no signs at all.

And thus, merely because it had turned out so in the past, every member of the expedition had come to entertain a semi-serious belief that something momentous was bound to happen on moving day.

A general feeling of expectancy pervaded the entire *safari* when we broke camp at the Wangai River at dawn of a hazy morning. The sky was clear of clouds, but behind the hills of the Mau

Lassoing Wild Animals

escarpment a veldt fire had been burning for several days, so that a veil of smoke was seen hanging in the air as the dawn broadened into day. The smell of the burning veldt and the nearness of the fire lent an oppressive warmth to the still morning.

“You two boys had better carry your heavy ropes,” the Colonel said at starting. “We might meet something.”

We had finished with the Kedong and Rift valleys. We had hunted every corner of the district within striking distance of the water. And we had had success of a kind. Cheetah, eland, hartebeest, and serval-cat we had roped and tied and photographed. But the really big game had so far escaped us. For this reason we had decided to take the road over the Mau, where the smoke haze hung heavy, and so on into the Sotik country, where both lion and rhino were said to abound.

I n A f r i c a

For the first ten miles of the march our way led across untraveled country, toward the two deep ruts in the veldt that were known as the wagon road. We had an extra ox-wagon with us now, in charge of Mr. Curry, an Africander, who lived with his partner on a farm on the border of the Sotik, and who on his return journey home with his wagon had agreed to help us carry supplies. Curry was slight and round-shouldered, with light yellow hair. His face was burned a bright red, excepting his nose, which was white where the skin was peeling. He had a peculiar, slow, drawling way of talking—when he talked at all, which was seldom. Being an inhabitant of the district into which we were going, he was naturally subjected at first to a number of questions in regard to the big game there.

“Plenty of rhino in your part of the world, I suppose?”

Lassoing Wild Animals

"Y—as," drawled Curry.

"And lion, too, I imagine?"

"Y—as."

"Ought to get some giraffe on the way, hadn't we?"

"Y—as."

"Rhino pretty scarce just now, though, aren't they?"

"Y—as," Curry answered placidly.

Thus it soon became apparent that Curry's chief ambition was to agree pleasantly with whatever anybody said, which tended to discredit any information he had to impart. So, as a matter of course, the questions ceased, and when no more were asked him Curry's conversation ceased also.

It was rough going for the ox-wagons those first ten miles, and they made slow time of it along the base of the hills. According to our custom on the march the Colonel and the two cowboys, the

In Africa

picture department (composed of Kear-ton and Gobbet), and Ulyate (the white hunter) and myself rode in a widely extended line in front of the *safari*, sweeping the country for game. It was hot at the base of the hills — so hot that when your bridle hand dropped inadvertently to the pommel of the saddle, the brass mounting there seemed to burn you. Not a breath of air was stirring, and the sun shone down blazing through the wisps of smoke haze, and the heat waves rose from the dead, parched veldt so that the distant southern volcano looked all quivering.

Then from out the blurred vista in front little by little a clump of comparatively large trees began to take definite shape. Another half mile farther, and we saw that something was moving among the trees as high up as the top-most branches.

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“Giraffe,” said Ulyate, and no sooner had he spoken the word than the great towering animals wheeled and fled from their shelter with that long-legged gallop of theirs which looks so easy and slow, but which carries them over the ground as fast as a speedy horse can run.

The Colonel and the two cowboys set off at a hand gallop in a vain attempt to round them up and drive them back to the cameras. The race was a hopeless one for the horsemen from the start. But, according to the general method of operations adopted by the Colonel from the very beginning, no chance of a capture, however slim it might appear, was to remain untried so long as men and horses could endure.

The two ruts of the wagon road led close by the grove of trees, and when the rest of us reached this spot and dismounted to await results, the three

In Africa

leading horsemen had disappeared long ago into the scrub-grown country to the south.

As noon approached, the heat became more and more oppressive. The cameras had been screwed to the tripods and covered with our coats to protect them from the sun. The horses grazed near by. Mac was sent up one of the trees to warn us of the approach of anything like a giraffe, and the rest of us sat on the ground round the bole in the small circle of thin shade and lazily watched the black ants always crawling and climbing and zigzagging back and forth over the network of fallen twigs and leaves. It was too hot to talk — it was too hot to sleep or think. And by and by the ox-wagons came up, and the oxen brought the flies. For a time then the only sounds were the slow crunching of the feeding horses and an occasional

Lassoing Wild Animals

inarticulate snarl from some one or other who foolishly tried to brush the flies away from his face.

Eventually, after a long time had passed, Means rode into the grove of trees, unheralded by Mac and alone. The bay horse had fallen badly, wrenching his rider's back where once he had been hurt before. Means took his saddle off, threw it on the ground, and sat on it.

"He dropped into a pig hole," he explained, "an' hopped out again as neat as could be. But in hoppin' out he hopped into another, an' that just naturally discouraged him an' he come down with me."

No comments were made, nor did Means expect any. But evidently he had considered it only justice to the bay that the mishap should receive from him the proper explanation.

In Africa

Then Loveless returned, also alone. He made a few grumbling remarks about its being all nonsense to run the horses to death when there was no chance at all. But as his listeners showed not the slightest interest in the matter, he, too, relapsed into silence.

The Colonel was the last to come in. He rode straight to the tree where the company were gathered, dismounted, and sat down. Then he spoke to the world at large.

"They must be about here somewhere," he said. "And being about here somewhere, we'll get 'em yet."

When the shadow beneath the tree began to lengthen toward the east, the *safari* shook itself together and prepared to move on once more. But this time, instead of occupying his customary position at the head of the column, the Colonel lagged behind.

Lassoing Wild Animals

Immediately after leaving the grove of trees, the road commenced to climb the first rises of the Mau escarpment. As we mounted higher up the hillside, the view behind us opened out into a grand panorama of the two valleys and their sentinel volcanoes, with the smoke haze hanging over all. For a time, those of us who were in front rode half sideways in the saddle, looking back over the way we had come and over the district we had grown to know so well. Then we crossed a small, level park that formed the crest of the first hill, and as we moved down the western slope the view behind us disappeared and the new country spread before us.

Kearton was riding with his head sunk on his chest like a sick man. Gobbet asked if anything was wrong with him.

“Nothing bad; too much heat this morning, likely.”

I n A f r i c a

“Want to hunt up a bit of shade and lie up awhile?”

“No, I’ll go on.”

Gobbet shrugged his shoulders. “You’re the judge,” he said.

Hill after hill stretched away in front to the one upstanding kopje that marked the top of the Mau. The district was wooded with small, twisted trees, and the fire had crossed here, so that the ground was black and the air smelled stronger of burning.

Presently Means stopped. “I’d better wait till the Colonel comes along,” he explained. “The Colonel don’t carry any weapons.”

Loveless stopped with him, and, as Ulyate was somewhere behind with the ox-wagons and porters, this left Kear-ton, Gobbet, and myself to ride on by ourselves. For a mile or more the road lifted and dipped with monotonous reg-

Lassoing Wild Animals

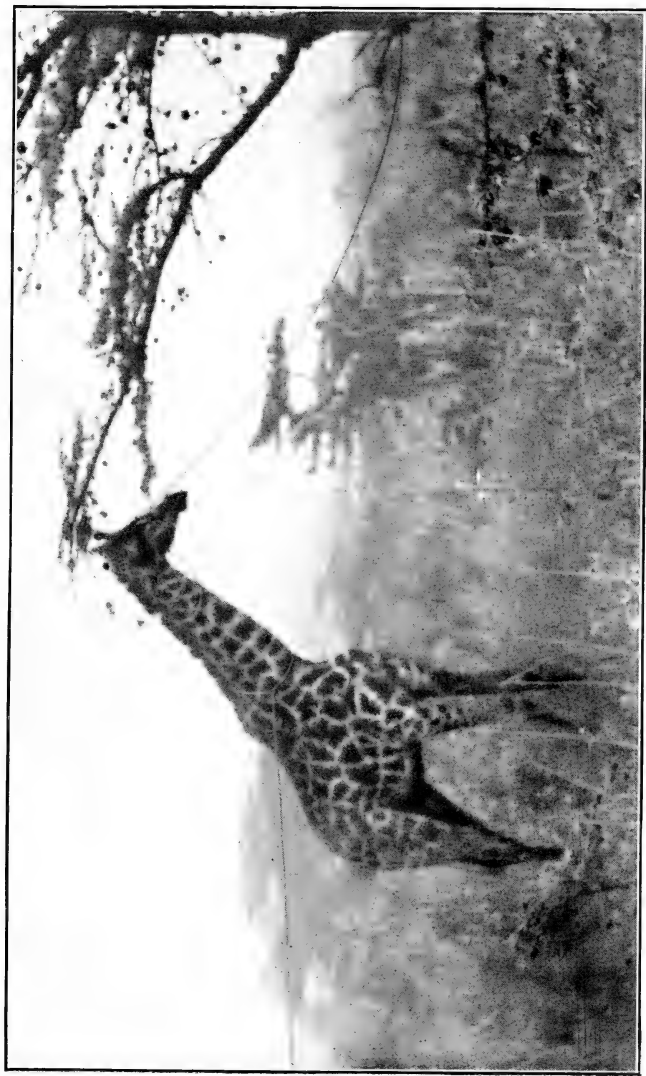
ularity, and the burnt land was still on either hand, without a sign of life anywhere to be seen. So when the sun really began to decline toward the west, Gobbet, who had once been assistant manager of the Alhambra Music Hall in Brighton, told the story of Harry Lauder and the liquid-air biscuits, and it seemed to do Kearton good. Kearton had just told Gobbet to quit his lying, when all three of us realized that for the last half minute we had been unconsciously listening to the beat of a galloping horse on the road behind.

The next instant Ulyate pulled up in a cloud of dust.

"Colonel wants you," he said.
"They've rounded up a giraffe."

We wheeled the horses and started back on the run.

"About—three—miles! Left—of the—road!" Ulyate shouted after us.



"LOVELESS SUCCEEDED IN PLACING THE NOOSE ON THE HIGH NECK OF THE GIRAFFE"

In Africa

There were various reasons that called for haste. How long the ropers could keep the giraffe rounded up was especially uncertain, and then, besides, it was near the end of the day and soon the light would be too far gone for a picture.

We met the line of porters and they scattered right and left. Farther on, the ox-teams crowded one side to give us room. Then we came upon the four special porters with the cameras. Kear-ton took his machine on the saddle with him, and Gobbet caught up the tripod from another pair of outstretched arms.

When we reached the bit of clearing and looked to the left of the road, we saw the long neck and head of a giraffe sharply outlined against the sky.

The giraffe stood motionless. His feet were spread a little apart as though he was prepared to dash away again at the

Lassoing Wild Animals

first opportunity, and he gazed in a curious way first at one, then at another of the three ropers that surrounded him and now sat their horses, waiting. There was still enough light left for a picture, but Kearton was nearly done.

"Give him a minute's breather," said the Colonel. "We'll hold the critter till he's ready."

We took Kearton off his horse and stretched him on the ground and poured the lukewarm water from a canteen on his head. Meanwhile Gobbet screwed the camera to the tripod and set it up.

By the time Gobbet had finished, Kearton was on his feet again. From his position near by, Means ventured the opinion that it was too much excitement that had knocked him over, and Kearton swore back at him pleasantly and went to work.

A high-pitched yell from the Colonel

I n A f r i c a

sent the giraffe away across the open with that clumsy-looking, powerful gallop that is all his own, and with his long neck plunging slowly back and forth.

Loveless's black, one of the fastest horses in the string, had hard work to gain on the giraffe, especially as the animal swerved quickly at the last moment and fled down the eastern slope of the hill through the scrub where the going was none too good.

It was a difficult throw — and a new one for a Western cowboy — to send the noose so far up into the air over the head perched high on the long, swaying neck.

But at the first attempt Loveless succeeded, and then reined in gently so as not to throw the beast, because a giraffe would fall heavily, and would very likely break his neck or a leg if tumbled over.

Finally he was brought to a standstill, his feet spread apart as before, and for a

Lassoing Wild Animals

while the two stood facing each other — the cowboy and the towering giraffe, with the rope from the saddle horn leading up at a considerable angle to the shoulders of the prize. The rest of the hunt soon gathered about them. Although the light was rapidly failing, Kearton finished what was left of his roll of film. The whir of the camera ended with a peculiar flapping sound.

“That’s all,” said Kearton, and sank down on a near-by stone.

But Loveless and the giraffe continued to face each other undisturbed.

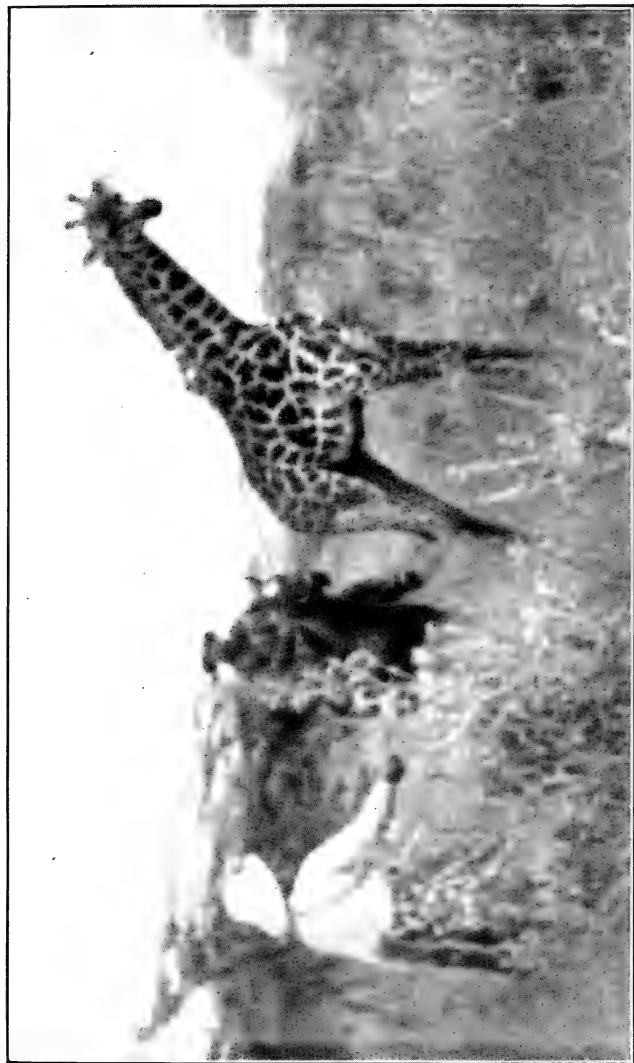
“Well?” said Loveless, presently.

“Well?” echoed the Colonel.

“Well, how are we going to take this rope off him? We’ve got none to spare, you know.”

“Get a ladder,” suggested Means.

“No, we won’t need a ladder,” said the Colonel seriously; “but we’ll have



"WELL, HOW ARE WE GOING TO TAKE THIS ROPE OFF HIM?"

In Africa

to throw him, after all. We can do it gently, I guess, without hurting him.”

Accordingly Means roped the giraffe by one hind leg and pulled it out from under him, so that he sank easily to the ground and both the ropes were loosened and freed.

The sun had set and the short twilight was rapidly deepening. The ox-wagons and porters were several miles ahead. So we packed up the camera, coiled up the ropes, mounted, and rode away, and the giraffe raised himself on his haunches among the bushes and watched us go.

We camped at a water hole that night, and started on again the next morning in the darkness before the dawn, with a porter ahead carrying a lantern to show the way. With ox-wagons it is a three-days' journey from that water hole to the Guas Nyiro River at the border of the

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Sotik. The country through which we passed continued to be the same as that of the Mau escarpment — a succession of low hills and shallow valleys covered with the small, twisted trees. And there was plenty of water on the way. But there was no game in the district.

We had been told before starting that we need not expect to see anything on the way, because antelope, zebra, and such like animals avoid the wooded section so as not to be caught unaware by lions, and, since the prey seek the safety of the open plains, the lions are compelled to follow.

In spite of this fact, and although the dense woods and broken ground generally forced the *safari* to keep to the road, the cowboys were always ready and the cameras always loaded with film. But the land on either side remained silent and deserted.

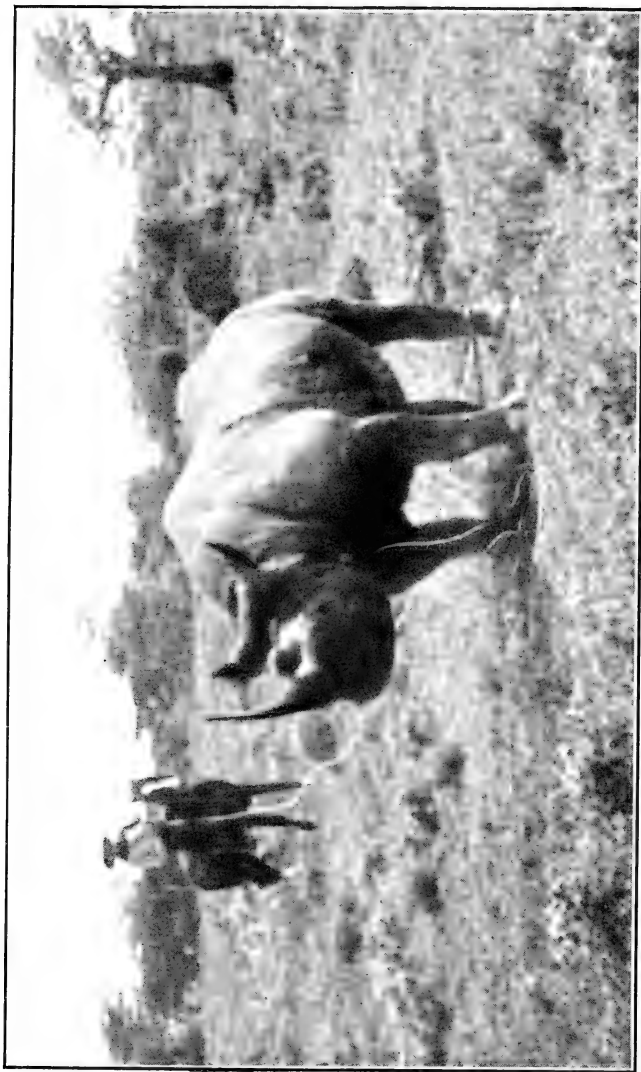
In Africa

And each day's journey was the same as the one before; the start in the gray of the morning, the long, hot ride, with the road gently rising and falling over the hills, and the sudden cool of the evening when the sun went down. At times the camera department would take moving pictures of the wagons and porters crossing a river, where an especially picturesque bit of scenery offered an attractive setting. Occasionally Means, as he rode along, would commence singing one of the songs of our Western plains, verse after verse, seemingly without end, recounting in detail some local historical event, such as an Indian attack on an army post, a shooting affair at a dance, or a train-robber's hanging. He would sing more to himself than to anybody else, and if this began to bore him at all, he would stop in the middle and leave the story untold.

Lassoing Wild Animals

Then sometimes, when we outspanned for an hour at noon, the four special camera porters would give imitations of Kearton and Gobbet taking pictures, of Loveless shoeing horses, or of Means in the act of roping. And in the evenings, when the day's march was done and the outpost fires had been lighted, the talk of the company would turn to our chances of finding luck in the Sotik country that lay ahead.

In the afternoon of March 16 we reached Webb's Farm, in the Guas Nyiro Valley, which lies at the edge of the big plains. In this neighborhood there were three farms — Webb's, Curry's, and Agate's — and on the evening of our arrival some of their men paid a visit to the camp. They had heard of the expedition, and each in turn examined the horses, the dogs, the ropes, and the saddles, and then, like the



"WITH THE ROPED LEG HE DRAGGED THE HORSE AFTER HIM"

In Africa

hunters at Nairobi, asked the inevitable question:

“But how are you going to do it?”

“Oh, we’ll do it somehow,” the Colonel replied good-naturedly. And the visitors shook their heads a little and smiled and changed the subject.

But to attempt to rope a rhinoceros or a lion required fresh horses, and ever since we had left Nairobi, nearly a fortnight ago, we had worked our horses hard every day. Now that we had reached the land of the big game, the Colonel for the first time called a day of rest. So we loafed about camp from sunrise to sunset and by evening were heartily sick of it all.

Perhaps we had expected too much of this Sotik country; perhaps the expedition was running, temporarily, in a streak of bad luck; but the fact remains that when we resumed hunting on March 18, disappointment only followed disappointment.

Lassoing Wild Animals

As we had done in the Rift Valley, so here we adopted the method of sweeping the country with a widely extended line. The first day we rode far to the southward, to the Hot Springs and back, and found nothing, and an unreasoning depression settled upon the expedition. The next day we rode still farther, to the westward this time, and again found nothing, and so the depression deepened. Also on the afternoon of this day it rained heavily, and Curry agreed with Ulyate that this probably meant the beginning of the rainy season, which was already overdue.

That night at the supper table the Colonel spoke his mind. The rain was dripping through the canvas fly overhead, and the Colonel wore his broad-brimmed hat to help keep the water off his plate.

“There’s no use hanging round here

In Africa

any longer," he said; "not a bit of use. We haven't seen anything, nor a sign of anything. When the rains begin in earnest, this ground will soften fast an' the horses will get bogged an' we'll have to quit. So from now on we've got to work fast. Now Ulyate says there's water about twelve miles from here to the north — called the Soda Swamp. We'll start for the Soda Swamp in the morning."

Again it was moving day. The morning dawned fine after the rain, and the air was clear, and the country looked greener and fresher than it had ever looked before. By the time the sun rose, the first wagon was packed, so the *safari* set out on the journey, leaving the second wagon to load and follow our tracks, for there was no road to the Soda Swamp.

At the last moment the Colonel de-

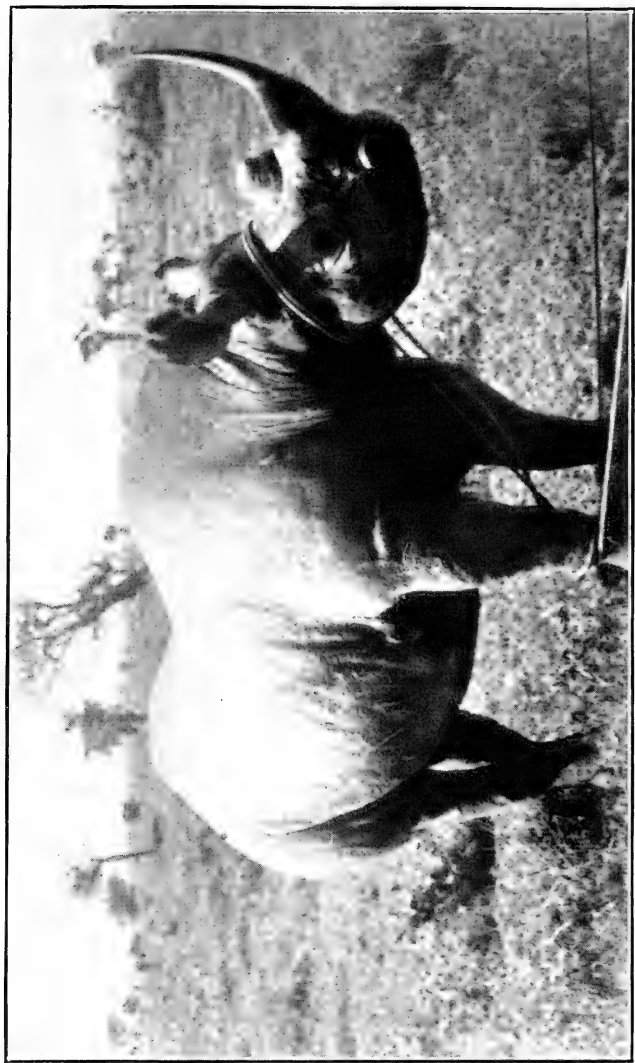
Lassoing Wild Animals

cided that he and the cowboys might just as well make a circuit to the westward of the line of march on the off chance of finding game.

“We covered that district pretty thoroughly yesterday,” he said. “But still, you never can tell.”

Yet nobody thought it worth while for the camera department to go with them, and so Kearton and Gobbet and the four special porters trailed along with the slow, plodding wagon. In the first place, the wagons would follow the shortest route and the horses would be none the worse for an easy day; in the second, if by the remotest chance the Colonel flushed anything worth while, he could more easily find the cameras.

Curry had remained behind to bring on the second load, and soon Ulyate left us to make a *détour* past Agate's Farm to procure another sack of rice that was



THE RHINO ABOUT TO CHARGE GOBBET'S CAMERA

In Africa

badly needed. Ours was a large *safari*, and the details of transportation required close attention.

The morning wore on. The sky remained clear and the heat became intense. The direction in which we were traveling led us along the border of the plains, through small green parks, scattered groves of trees, and scrub.

So far as the mounted men were concerned, the march was a succession of rides and halts. The heavily laden ox-wagon traveled slowly, and it soon became our custom to dismount in a bit of shade and let the wagon pass ahead about a mile, when we would mount again and catch up with it and then repeat the process.

At one of these places there was a grass-grown mound against which we sat, leaning comfortably, and speculated on the distance we had come

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and the distance we had to go. When, after a while, it became evident that we should never agree in the matter, the conversation altered to a sort of spasmodic affair.

"I thought this district was so full of big game that you couldn't sleep at night for the lions roaring around you," Gobbet remarked lazily.

"Wait till you get among them," said Kearton. "*Sais*, keep that horse farther away; he'll be walking on us next."

"Well, I haven't been kept awake any yet," Gobbet replied.

"I wonder where that wagon's got to," and Kearton raised himself on one elbow and peered ahead from beneath the down-tilted brim of his helmet. Then he lay back again and shut his eyes.

"Means is coming," he said.

The announcement occasioned no sur-

In Africa

prise. Undoubtedly Means had some reason for returning over the trail, and when he reached the mound we should probably learn what he wanted.

Means dismounted and sat down beside us. "We've found a rhino over in the next valley yonder," he remarked, and nodded his head toward the west.

"A rhino is no matter to joke about," said Gobbet. "Please remember that in the future."

"I'm not jokin'," said Means. "Colonel's watchin' him. Loveless stopped half-way here, about three miles off. Colonel sent me to bring the rest of you and get the heavy rope."

"Is that right, Means?" Kearton asked sharply.

"Sure."

"Come on, then."

In five minutes we had overtaken the wagon and stopped it, and while Means

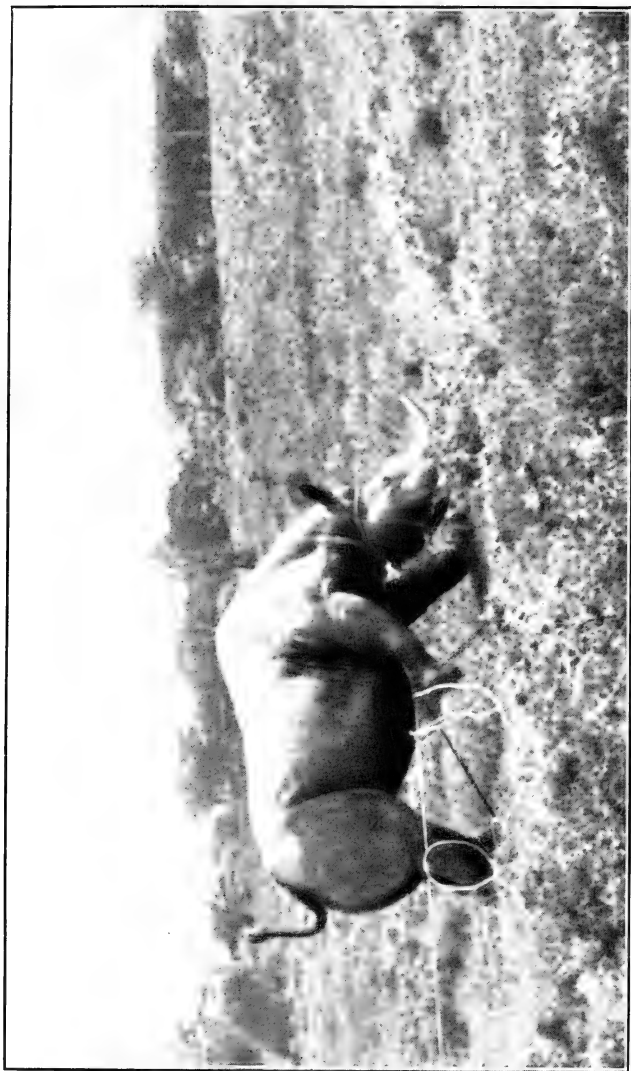
L a s s o i n g W i l d A n i m a l s

clambered up on to the load to hunt for the heavy rope, Kearton collected the camera porters and started ahead with them in the direction Means pointed out.

But Means could not find the rope he wanted. He threw off half the load without success.

“It’s on the other wagon. There’s where it is,” he finally concluded. “No time to wait now. Other wagon likely hasn’t started yet. We’ll have to do with what we’ve got.”

We rode on at an easy jog to keep the horses fresh, and at the end of half an hour we came upon Loveless waiting for us just beneath the crest of a rise. He had off-saddled his horse and had turned him loose to graze a bit before the coming work, and a few minutes were occupied while Loveless saddled up again and Kearton and Gobbet adjusted their cameras and took them on their horses.



"ONE LENGTH OF LINE LEFT—THE REST OF THE ROPES DANGLING, BROKEN, FROM THE RHINO"

In Africa

Finally every one was ready, and we set forth once more on a wide détour to the north to approach the beast from down the wind.

Loveless gave us the latest news: "The Colonel came over the rise a half hour ago and said the rhino was laying down resting quiet. The Colonel went back again at once to keep watch."

As we proceeded farther on the circuit and began to ride down the gentle slope into the adjacent valley, we slowed down the pace to a cautious walk. No one spoke, and on the grass of the veldt the tread of the horses made scarcely any sound.

Suddenly the Colonel appeared, walking toward us, bent low. He had backed out of his hiding-place behind a clump of scrub.

"He's laying down over there about a hundred yards away," he whispered.

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“Now we want to catch the start of the show. You boys ready?”

Means tightened his cinch, and shook his rope loose and coiled it up again. Loveless said he was ready. One of the *saises* produced the Colonel's horse from behind another clump of scrub, and Kearton dismounted and began creeping forward with his camera.

“Don't start him up till I get my position,” he cautioned. “I'll wave my hand.”

On account of the growth of low bushes we could not see the rhino, but in silence we watched Kearton tiptoeing farther and farther ahead toward the spot where the Colonel had said the beast was lying down. The time was approximately a little after noon. The wind that was blowing was light, and came to us hot over the sunny reaches of veldt. The sky was cloudless.

In Africa

Then the three ropers commenced maneuvering forward, swinging out a little to the right. Kearton stopped. He set up his camera and sighted it, and took out his handkerchief and carefully wiped the lens.

When Kearton waved his hand, the Colonel's yell shattered the stillness and the great beast heaved up out of the grass and tossed his head and sniffed the air, and snorted. The horsemen rode full tilt at him, and with surprising quickness the rhino wheeled and broke away south down the valley.

For a good three miles the rhino ran straight and fast. Finally he came into more open country, which was dotted here and there with small thorn trees. Here, also, in one place there was a fair-sized pool of water, left over from the rains of the night before. The rhino selected this pool as a good position

Lassoing Wild Animals

from which to act on the defensive. He splashed into the water, stopped, and faced the horsemen.

Then followed a few minutes' respite for all concerned. The horses were panting heavily after the sharp run, and the rhino's position in the pool rendered it difficult to approach him for a chance to throw a rope. Evidently considering himself safe for the moment, the beast rolled once or twice in the water and then stood on guard as before, but with his black sides dripping.

"We've got to get him out of that," said the Colonel. "A horse wouldn't stand a show there. Now when I get him to charge me, you boys stand by."

Before the Colonel finished speaking, he was already edging toward the pool. For fifteen yards the rhino watched him coming. Then with a great snort he charged out of the water, sending the



"STEP BY STEP THE HORSES DRAGGED HIM TO A TREE, WHERE LOVELESS MADE THE ROPE FAST"

In Africa

white spray flying in every direction, and the Colonel had to ride hard to keep ahead of the tossing horn. But Means was after the rhino like a flash, and with a quick throw caught him round the neck. The big bay fell back on his haunches and the rope snapped like twine.

“We’ll miss that heavy rope to-day,” Means said.

“We’ll tie him up with what we’ve got,” the Colonel replied. “Only we’ve got to tire him out some first. What we’ll do is to make him charge us one after the other, so he’ll run three times to the horses’ running once.”

It was a full half-hour before the next attempt was made to throw a rope. Time after time the rhino came plunging out of the water to charge the nearest horseman. Our Western horses proved to be only just a trifle faster than the

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rhino, so that each time the beast nearly caught them. Besides, here and there the ground was bad with ant-bear holes, which had to be avoided, for a fall would mean disaster. But little by little it became apparent that the rhino's continual charging was beginning to produce an effect.

In the meanwhile the rest of the chase was coming up. In the distance we could see them hurrying down the valley — horsemen and porters considerably scattered, as if each one followed a route of his own choosing. Kearton led on his big chestnut. He was carrying the heavy camera under his arm, the tripod over his shoulder. The reins were hanging loose over his saddle horn, his heels were thumping the horse's sides, and the perspiration was streaming down his face.

"We lost you," he panted. "How's it going? What a picture!"

In Africa

Mac, the Mohammedan, and Aro, the Masai warrior, took the apparatus from him, and he dismounted and went to work.

At the second attempt to rope the beast, Loveless caught him by one hind leg, and the rhino decided to shift his base of operations to an ant-hill in the neighboring clearing. His mode of progression was to walk on three legs and to drag the black horse after him with the other. He reached the ant-hill and demolished it and paused for a breathing spell.

The chase followed after, and Kearton went into action on the north, and Gobbet on the south, near a small thorn tree, with a negro porter beside him. The rhino caught sight of Gobbet's camera and charged. The porter went up the tree like a flash. Gobbet was bent over, looking through his view-finder,

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which, of course, gave him no idea of how fast the beast was bearing down on him nor how close he had already come.

“Look out!” yelled the Colonel.

Gobbet glanced up over the top of the camera and made a jump for the tree. But the porter was already in the branches, and the tree was so small there was not room for two, and Gobbet had to run for it. The next second, with a powerful upward stroke of his horn, the rhino sent the apparatus flying. Then Means succeeded in attracting his attention and he charged the horseman instead. Gobbet picked up the débris, found that the tripod-head was split clean in two as with an axe, found the camera itself undamaged, found there was enough head left to support the camera, quickly mounted his machine again, and was just in time to catch the end of the rhino's chase after Means.



"FROM ANT-HILL TO THORN-TREE AND BACK AGAIN THE FIGHT WENT ON"

In Africa

And all the while Kearton had his camera trained upon the scene in which his assistant was playing the conspicuous part.

"I hope I got that good," he said; "it'll make fine action — fine."

From one position to another, from ant-hill to thorn tree and back to ant-hill once more, the fight went on through the long, hot afternoon. Ropes were thrown and caught and broken, mended and thrown again. The horses were pulled, all standing, one way and another. Rolls of film were exposed and replaced by fresh ones. The rhino sulked and stormed and charged in turn.

At the end of the fourth hour, Loveless had one short length of light line left. The rest of the ropes were dangling, broken, from the rhino's legs and neck as he stood at bay over the ruins of the ant-hill.

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The sun was rapidly canting toward the west. The continual work in the intense heat, without food or water, was beginning to tell on both horses and men. The rhino was weakening faster. But only one hour of daylight remained, and if the beast could hold out till dark we should lose him.

There was the dead stump of a tree with the roots protruding lying in the grass near by. The Colonel told Means to fasten the stump to the last piece of line, and Loveless rode toward Kear-ton's machine, past the rhino, dragging the stump behind him. As the Colonel had foreseen, the beast charged at the stump, and the loose ropes hanging from him became entangled in the roots.

So on they went at a run, first Loveless, then the stump, bounding over the ground, then the charging rhino, headed straight for Kear-ton's camera. The

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Masai warrior stood by the tripod with his long spear poised high, and Kearton turned the handle and shouted at Loveless:

“How many times have I got to tell you not to come straight into the lens? Bring him on at an angle! . . . I don’t want to be unreasonable,” he added, when the rhino stopped, “but you ought to have learned better by this time.”

Then, by hauling in gently, Loveless succeeded in recovering two of the ropes, and they were pieced together and thrown again, catching the rhino by one hind leg. Both the cowboys put their horses to work pulling forward on the rope, and they lifted that one hind leg ahead. The tired beast shifted his great body after it, and thus step by step the horses dragged him up to a tree, where Loveless passed the end of the rope two turns around the bole and made it fast.

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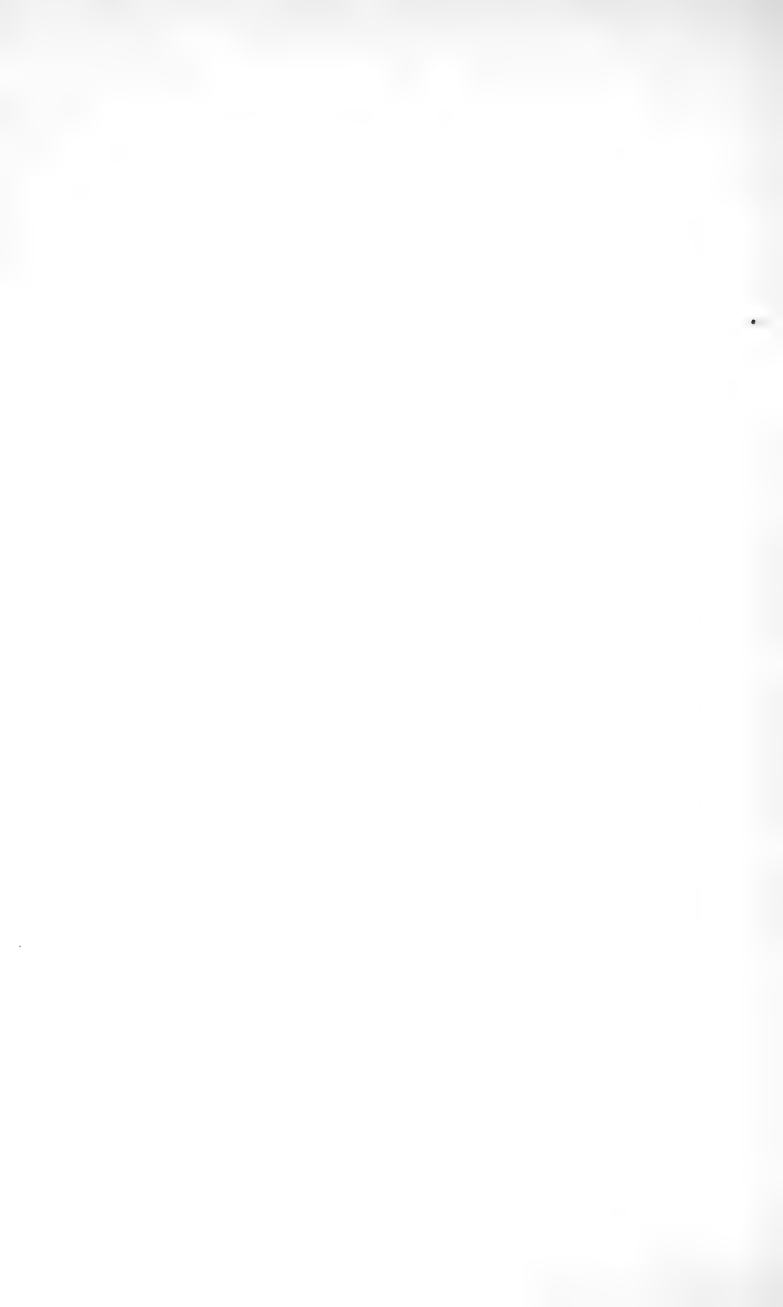
The rhino charged once just before the knot was tied, and Loveless had to jump into the branches through the thorns to escape. He charged again, rather feebly this time, trying to get free, but the rope held well and tripped him up. After that he stood quietly at the end of his tether, watching the camera in a sullen way while Kearton took his picture with the last few feet of film.

By this time the light was almost gone, the films were finished, horses and men were nearly done, and, besides, it was moving day and high time we resumed the march.



"HE CHARGED AGAIN, FEEBLY, BUT THE ROPES HELD WELL AND TRIPPED HIM"

PART THREE



PART THREE

THERE was no use trying to avoid the fact any longer. The lions, for the present, had left the Sotik country, and by remaining in camp at the Soda Swamp the Buffalo Jones Expedition was only wasting time. And time was precious then — was growing more precious every day — if we expected to finish the work before rains.

The lion was the only big game we wanted now to complete the list of wild animals roped and tied, and the lion was the most important of all. The expedition had traveled the long journey to the Sotik country especially to find them. Yet ever since the capture of the rhinoceros on the moving day of March 20th we had thoroughly swept the land

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in the vicinity of the Soda Swamp without finding even a single spoor. It simply meant that the lions were not there. Some explanations were offered, some arguments arose as to the whys and wherefores of this state of affairs. A few maintained that the lions had always been found there before; it was strange they should have gone. A theory was advanced that the rains were late and the country was unusually dry, so that the game had shifted to better pastures. Perhaps some water hole they depended on had failed. There is generally some discussion on such occasions. We had counted so much on the Sotik to give us our chance that the truth was hard to realize at first. But no matter what the cause might be, we were finally forced to acknowledge the undeniable fact — the lions had left the district.

On the evening of March 25 the expe-

In Africa

dition faced the situation. As usual, the night fell cold, and when supper was finished the company collected about the fire that was burning close to the horses. A light wind stirred in the leaves overhead and the sky was full of stars. Here and there a tired horse was already half asleep, and his head nodded gently in the firelight. From the darkness came the low talk of the *saises*, rolled in their blankets on the ground at the end of the picket line.

Most of the men stood with their backs to the flames, gazing vacantly at the horses, the trees, or the stars. For a while not a word was said. Means threw another log on the fire and then squatted on his heels and silently watched the flames catch the bark and flare up brightly. As the heat increased, Kearton took a step farther away and stood again. Every one knew that the Sotik had failed us

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and that it was time for us to go, and so eventually when the Colonel spoke he only voiced the general conclusion.

“We’ve got to go back,” he said, speaking straight in front of him at the nearest of the sleepy horses. “We’ve got to go to-morrow and have a try from the water hole at the Rugged Rocks where we saw the two lions on the way out here. We may find one there and we may not. If we don’t, we’ve got to go on to Nairobi and start all over again — provided the rains don’t begin.”

Accordingly, through the long hot days the *safari* plodded back over the way we had come — from the Soda Swamp to Agate’s, from Agate’s to the Honeybird River, and then on once more to the Last Water. The cameras were stowed away on the wagons, the ropes remained coiled on the saddles, for there was no probability of our find-

In Africa

ing lions on the way. And each man rode as his judgment decreed, because the business of the *safari* then was to get on over the road, and the ox-wagons behind came along as best they could.

For the most part it was a silent journey. The expedition had turned its back on the district that only a short week ago had held out such alluring promises, and any day now the rains might commence effectually to put a stop to the work before it was done. Then, too — although this may seem to be a small matter, still it had weight with all of us — the white hunters of the country had ridiculed the idea of our being able to rope a lion, and the prospect of returning and admitting defeat without having been given a proper chance was not pleasant to contemplate.

At the Last Water we outspanned for the night and most of the succeeding

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day. In view of the situation, the long halt was absolutely necessary to give the oxen a good rest and drink before setting forth on the twenty-four-hour journey without water to the Rugged Rocks. But throughout the dragging hours of the enforced rest always there loomed ahead of us the possibility of failure and the need of haste. No mention was made of this openly. The only sign of our underlying anxiety was a vague restlessness pervading the entire *safari*.

Once on the march again, with the sun low in the west, the restlessness disappeared. The night came dark, because the moon rose late, and the air was still, so that the dust that lifted from beneath the feet of the oxen drifted along with the wagon. Now and again one of the wheels bumped over a rock in the road and the brake beam shook and rattled. At times the high-pitched cries

I n A f r i c a

of the native drivers pierced the stillness. Ahead of us the bulk of the wagon-load loomed big against the stars.

When the dying moon first showed red through the branches of the twisted trees, the *safari* crossed the top of the Mau and commenced the slow descent to the valley, and the wagons in front became lost in the darkness and the dust. When the morning star rose, we had come to the foothills of the escarpment, and the dawn wind sprang up cold, so that the men shivered a little in their saddles and buttoned up their coats and began to talk.

“It was just about here that we caught the giraffe that day,” said Kear-ton. “Remember? And wasn’t it hot?”

The talk drifted aimlessly, round and about, from the western ranches to Flicker Alley and the London Music Halls, only to return in the end, as it

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naturally would, to the water hole at Rugged Rocks and our chances of finding lion. The discussion was lengthy on this point — it always was.

By the time the sun came, the expedition had entered the plain of the Rift Valley, and with the rising of the sun the thirst began. Toward noon we halted for a couple of hours to allow the worst of the heat to pass over, gave the horses and the porters a little of the water that was carried on one of the wagons, and then inspanned again and went on. As the horsemen took the road the Colonel outlined his plan.

“We’ll give the horses a good rest to-night, for we ought to make camp early, and then start hunting the first thing in the morning. We’ve got enough horse-feed to last us three or four days if the water holds out that long. In that time we ought to get a lion if there’s

I n A f r i c a

any there. I'll ride on now a bit and look for signs."

The Colonel's horse was a faster walker than the others and slowly he forged ahead. Little by little the *safari* began to string out along the road until wide spaces grew between the ox-wagons, with the porters straggling after them a mile behind. A change had come over the valley since we had seen it last. The land was whiter beneath the blazing sunshine and the dust lay thicker in the road. Somehow it seemed deserted. The only movement was the shimmer of the heat waves.

The camera department had the slowest mounts, and as the march had become a plodding procession, in which the horses were allowed to choose their own paces, one by one the other members of the expedition passed us.

Loveless came from behind and rode with us for half a mile or so.

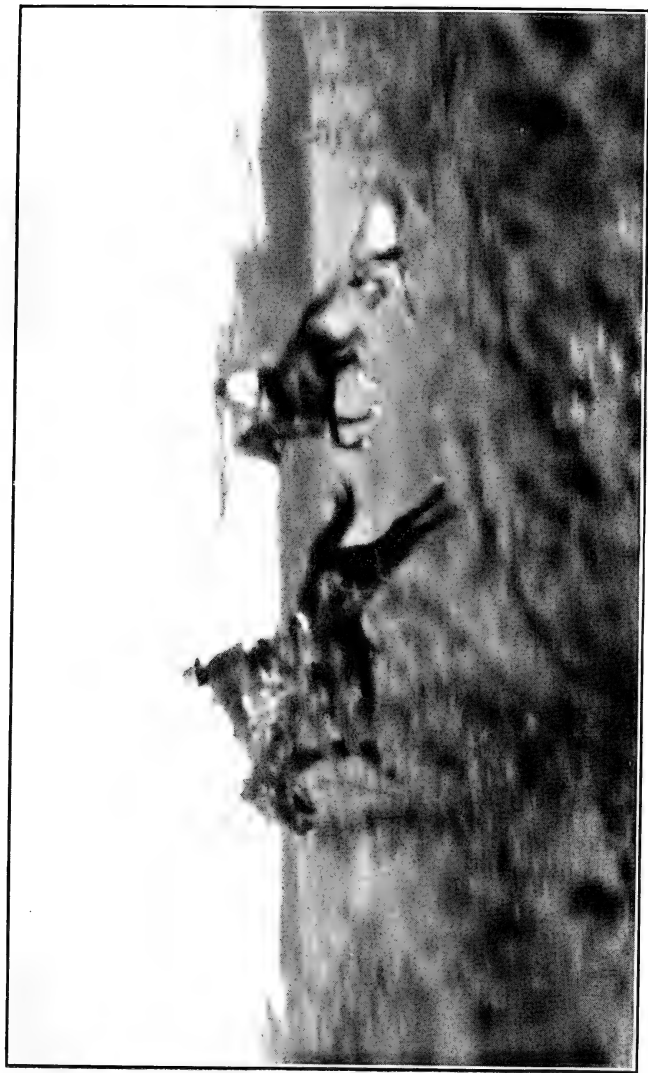
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"I've been thinking this thing over," he finally said, "and my idea is that after the dogs get the lion stopped, one of us can go by him, rope him, and keep on going, and then the other fellow can catch him by the hind legs and we've got him. If you keep on going fast enough, I don't think he'll have a chance to spring at you."

In the pause that followed the delivery of this opinion on a matter that had been thrashed out a hundred times before, his horse gradually carried him farther ahead until he had gone beyond the range of talk.

Ulyate, the white hunter, was the next. Kearton had just finished filling his pipe and he silently reached out the bag of tobacco. But Ulyate shook his head.

"Throat's too dry," he said. "But I want to be sure I understand what



"ALL AT ONCE THE LIONESS CHARGED"

In Africa

I've got to do. I'm to stand by to protect the cameras and leave the Colonel and the two boys to look after themselves. If the lion charges them I'm not to fire—only if he comes at the cameras.”

“That's right — only if he comes at the cameras.”

“That's what I thought, but I wanted to make sure —— It's a likely place, this Rugged Rocks,” he continued over his shoulder. “We might easily find one to-morrow.”

Means on his big bay borrowed a drink of water from Gobbet's canteen, and rode on after the others.

The march of the *safari* grew slower and slower. The road was flat, bending a little back and forth in long, sweeping curves, like a rope that had once been taut but was loosened. The native drivers no longer cried at the oxen, for the beasts knew by instinct that they were traveling

Lassoing Wild Animals

to water, and could be relied upon to do their best; and the men rode with their heads hung down, watching the shadows of the horses on the road and hoping to see them lengthen.

The Colonel, the two cowboys, and Ulyate reached the Rugged Rocks at least an hour ahead, and when the rest of us came straggling in we found them seated on the ground with their backs to the bole of a tree. None of them looked up as we halted there, dismounted, and turned the horses loose. Then Ulyate spoke.

“Water hole has dried,” he said.

There was nothing to be done about it. If the water hole had dried, it had dried. That was all. And we had to push on to Kijabe. Lions or no lions there was no appeal from that decree. So we sat down with the others and watched the progress of the far-off dust cloud that marked the approaching wag-

In Africa

ons. Then, when darkness came again, the *safari* resumed the march.

But the Colonel refused to abandon his former plan entirely without making at least one more attempt. Together with the two cowboys and Kearton he remained behind to scout at dawn the district between the Rugged Rocks and the railway.

“We might be able to tell if it’s worth while to come back here,” he explained.

It was nearly noon of the following day before the scouting party rejoined the expedition on the platform of the Kijabe station. The party reported that near the base of Longernot, the northern volcano, a belt of lava rock rises perpendicularly from the plain. Close to the southern end of this belt they had flushed two lions, a male and a female, and had kept sight of them for fully an hour. It was the opinion of all in the party

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that the lions lived in the neighborhood, probably in the rocks.

“Very likely,” said Ulyate; “no one has ever hunted that corner of the valley. There is no water there.”

At first the Colonel was anxious to start back for them at once, hauling the water with us; but after a moment's reflection he was compelled to concede that it was time to call a halt. Means had strained his back again and could no longer sit straight in the saddle. An old thorn wound in Loveless's foot needed attention. Horses, dogs, and oxen were entirely fagged out. And besides, the camera department demanded time to develop the earlier pictures, already too long kept in the rolls.

Of course, as the Colonel maintained, the rains might come and the chance be lost. Also the lions might not live in

In Africa

the rocks, as we thought, and to-morrow they might be gone.

“Better grab the opportunity while we have it,” he said.

“Look at the horses,” said Means.

The Colonel walked deliberately along the platform to where the horses were tethered among the trees, and stood there watching them for quite a while.

“You’re right, Means,” he said, when he returned to us. “They’ll need at least four or five days before we can put them at a lion — well, we’ve got to chance it.”

The next five days were the longest in the history of the expedition. The Colonel, Means, and Ulyate remained at Kijabe with the outfit. The rest of us traveled down the line to Nairobi to procure more porters, more horse-feed, and more supplies; and every day we watched the weather closely and speculated on the probabilities of how long

Lassoing Wild Animals

the lions would see fit to remain in the district. The time was so short that all other plans had been abandoned to take advantage of this one opportunity — the expedition was plunging, so to speak, on this final chance to succeed. But the weather held clear, and in the meanwhile the preparations for this last attempt were pushed with the utmost speed.

The hunters at Nairobi, together with the storekeepers and farmers of the vicinity, had heard of the capture of the rhino. On occasions some of them spoke of it to us. They explained that they had thought all along that we could undoubtedly rope a rhino.

“But you haven’t got a lion yet, have you?” they said.

On April 5 the preparations were nearly completed and Loveless’s foot was nearly well. So we started up the line to rejoin the outfit, leaving Gobbet



"SWINGING AND TOSSING ABOUT IN FRANTIC ENDEAVOR TO GET LOOSE"

In Africa

at Nairobi to finish developing the films. We could not afford to spend more time in preparation.

At Kijabe we found the horses thoroughly rested and Means's back much improved. He had refused to see a doctor, asserting that his back would just naturally get better of its own accord. He said he was ready to start.

With one exception the dogs were in good condition — old John from Arizona with his scars of many battles, Rastus and The Rake, taken from a pack of English fox-hounds, and Simba, the terrier, and the collie, clipped like a lion, from the London pound. Sounder, the American bloodhound, still showed some effects of distemper. But none of the dogs was to be left behind on this journey.

That night the ox-wagons were loaded — one with provisions and camp bag-

Lassoing Wild Animals

gage, the other with drums of water — and when the dawn first began to break over the top of the range the expedition set forth from the station. The crater on Longernot had already caught the first rays of the sun when we reached the bottom of the hill and started across the flat land of the valley.

There was no road leading to where we were going, nor track, nor path of any kind. No *safari* had ever gone there before. From the height of Kijabe station we had seen what looked to be a long, low mound in the distant veldt. The southern end of that long, low mound was our destination.

The horsemen, as usual, spread out in a widely extended line and passed in front of the wagons and porters. As we penetrated farther into the valley the nature of the country altered. Open parks and stretches of scrub suc-

In Africa

ceeded one another, with here and there a dry *donga* cutting deep into the ground. As we approached the mound it rapidly grew in height and the black rocks commenced to appear beneath the covering of verdure.

Among the settlers of the district this mound is called the Black Reef. It is the general opinion that the Black Reef is formed of lava that long ago flowed down into the plain from the crater of Longernot. The sides, which rise almost perpendicularly to a height of some two hundred feet, are composed of jagged blocks of stone, honeycombed with deep caves and caverns. The top is covered with thick scrub and creepers and tall, rank grasses. To the southward it ends abruptly, as though the lava flow had suddenly stopped and cooled.

Under the shadow of the Black Reef

Lassoing Wild Animals

the hunting party was divided into three parts. The day was too far advanced for any real hunting to be done, but as long as the light lasted the Colonel wanted to make a personal survey of the ground in the immediate vicinity of the rocks. Accordingly he rode to the northern end of the reef, sending the two cowboys to the plains to the south, while the rest remained where we had halted, behind the southern shoulder, to wait for the arrival of the wagons and make camp. But the only incident of the afternoon was a thunder-cloud that rose up out of the north and hung there, and then gradually disappeared, as the twilight advanced.

The others were late in coming in. The Colonel in the north had found tracks — innumerable tracks of different kinds of beasts — all excepting those of the lion. In the south the two cow-



LAYING AN EXTRA LINE TO MAKE SURE OF HER

In Africa

boys had found a large mixed herd of game; and Loveless had dismounted to shoot for meat, when out of the herd a rhino charged him and he had to kill it to save himself.

“Well, so long as he’s dead we’ll let him lie where he is,” said the Colonel. “Lions are mighty fond of rhino meat. They’ll travel miles to get it. Day after to-morrow, say just at dawn, we ought to be able to pick up a fresh trail there. If we don’t, it will mean that the lions are no longer here, that’s all.”

Loveless grunted some unintelligible comment.

“Might as well be cheerful,” said Means. “We’re not beat yet.”

The first real hunting day commenced at daylight the next morning. Hour after hour the horsemen traveled the plains, back and forth, and across and around, and carefully searched the base of

Lassoing Wild Animals

the Black Reef on every side. Only one spot was left untouched. The Colonel decreed that no one should approach where the dead rhino lay, lest our presence there should arouse suspicion too soon. The rhino was a sort of special chance that was to be saved for the proper time.

The day was unusually still and cloudless. Here and there throughout the plains scattered herds of zebra, hartebeests, and gazelles grazed in peace. Not a spoor or a sign of lion was to be seen. For us the day was a blank, and toward evening the thunder-cloud rose again out of the north and again melted away into the twilight.

The camp behind the shoulder of the Black Reef was a dry camp. Every drop of water had to be hauled in drums from Sewell's Farm. The ox-wagon went in the morning and returned in the afternoon. In this way we could haul just

In Africa

enough water to last the outfit twenty-four hours. Special rules were inaugurated. Horses and dogs were given the preference always, and one of the *escaries* was detailed to guard the drums.

That night the wagon was long in returning from Sewell's. When it finally arrived, the water in one of the drums had a strange taste.

"It's bad," said Loveless.

Immediately the affair assumed grave proportions. That particular drum became the most important object in camp. A feeling akin to personal animosity sprang up against it. For a time the merits and demerits of the case were seriously discussed, and some of the porters gathered there and stared stupidly at the wagon-load of water.

"I'll tell you what it is," said Ulyate; "it's the weeds they've used as a stopper."

Lassoing Wild Animals

The weeds in question were inspected closely and various judgments passed, and some of the men were reminded of other times in other lands when the water had turned bad on their hands.

Means drew a cupful and sipped deliberately.

"It might be the weeds," he finally remarked. "It's not really bad — only tastes bad."

So in the end we begged the question by setting the drum aside and deciding to use it only if we had to.

But there were other matters to be determined that evening.

In the Colonel's opinion the time had come for us to try to find a trail at the carcass of the rhino, and the talk lasted far into the night. When finally evolved, the plan of campaign was simple.

It was arranged that the Colonel, with the dogs, should go to the southeast,



HER LAST STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM—TRYING TO CUT THE ROPE WITH HER TEETH

In Africa

where the dead rhino lay, the two cowboys should ride about two miles to the southwest and wait near the lower end of the big *donga*, and Kearton, Ulyate, and myself should scale the southern face of the Black Reef, where, with the aid of glasses, we could keep in touch with the Colonel and the boys on the plain below. Thus the men would be stationed at each corner of a vast triangle. If the Colonel flushed a lion, the animal would probably break for either the rocks or the *donga*, and so either the cowboys or the camera department could cut him off. Because the distances were so great, the customary signal of two revolver shots to "gather" could not be relied upon; the lighting of a fire would mean the same.

The morning star was still bright in the eastern heavens when the expedition rode out of camp in the early hours

Lassoing Wild Animals

of April 8. At the end of half a mile the three parties gradually separated on slightly diverging lines and moved silently to their appointed stations. Leaving the horses and the camera porters at the base of the reef, the three of us of the center station climbed the rocks in the darkness and waited for the dawn.

Slowly the first signs of day appeared over the hills and the morning star commenced to fade. As the light strengthened, the wide panorama of the plains and the far-off mountains unfolded and the individual patches of scrub and single trees began to stand out distinctly from the general blur of the darker reaches.

For fully half an hour everything was still and the light steadily broadened. Then suddenly Ulyate pointed.

In the plain to the southeast we could

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see a black speck moving about in a strange manner — first one way, then another, then stopping and moving on again.

“It’s the Colonel,” said Kearton, who had the glasses. “I think I can see the dogs. He’s up to something.”

It was not many minutes before the Colonel’s actions took on a different trend. For a space he rode straight for the reef. There the smaller black specks of the dogs appeared on the plain in front. No doubt remained now of what the Colonel was up to. The dogs were on the trail of some animal — lion or hyena, there was no telling which — but the scent was hot and the hunt was coming strong.

At one place the dogs made a big bend to the north toward our camp. So the beast, whatever it was, had come to have a look at us in the night.

Lassoing Wild Animals

For the first time then, as they swung back for the rocks, we faintly heard a hound give tongue. It was the only sound in the stillness.

Kearton began tearing up the dry grass that grew in the cracks between the rocks, and piled it in a heap.

"Not yet," said Ulyate; "wait till we're sure."

On came the hunt, following close to the southern base of the reef. The hounds could be heard giving tongue in turn now. The Colonel rode behind, leaning forward and cheering on the dogs.

"He's made for the rocks all right — come on," said Ulyate as, rifle in hand, he started down the cliff.

Kearton touched a match to the pile of grass, and blew on it in his hurry, and as the small flame sprang into life he threw on some green stuff and in a thin



"THE REST WAS EASY"

In Africa

blue column the smoke rose up straight into the air.

“That will fetch the boys all right,” he said, and we followed Ulyate down to the plain.

Although the delay in lighting the fire was brief, yet by the time we had reached the base and had mounted the horses, the Colonel, Ulyate, and the dogs had already passed out of sight beyond a farther out-jutting buttress of rock.

We rounded the buttress only to find that the chase had vanished. The almost perpendicular wall of rocks was empty. There was a moment's halt. Then two quick shots rang out, and at once there began a general chorus of baying, yelping dogs, intermingled with the deep, heavy roar of a lion.

The sounds came from somewhere in the thick growth on top of the Reef, so we left the horses and climbed toward

Lassoing Wild Animals

the sound. On the plateau the ground was covered with rugged lava blocks, and the scrub and creepers were so dense that when Kearton shouted Ulyate's name the white hunter answered from not more than ten yards away.

"It's a lioness," said Ulyate. "The dogs have got her bayed. Look out! She's just on the other side of that bush. When I got here I found the Colonei seated on his horse, facing the beast and trying to rope her. He didn't even have a knife on him. Why she didn't charge him I don't know. He couldn't get away over this kind of ground. He told me to call the others and so I fired."

When the cowboys arrived from the distant *donga*, they came threading their way toward us through the brush, leading their horses. A short consultation was held.

"We've got to shift her," said the

In Africa

Colonel. "Can't do anything with her here. Bring the firecrackers. Bring—there she goes!"

The lioness had decided the issue and had bolted of her own accord. There was a streak of yellow through the bushes, a scrambling of dogs, wild, frightened cries from the approaching camera porters, and the hunt was on once more.

The beast ran to an open cave at the edge of the plateau and crouched there facing the dogs. To maneuver the horses was absolutely out of the question, so the lioness had to be shifted again. For upward of two hours then, by means of the dogs, firecrackers, and lighting the grass, we drove her from one stronghold to another, from crevasse to crevasse, in trying to force her down off the reef.

The sun rose and the heat commenced. The dogs were feeling the strain of the constant baying. One by one they would

Lassoing Wild Animals

seek a spot of shade and lie panting there for a while and then return to the fray. Sounder, being weak from distemper, was the first to give out, but he had done his share of the work. Porters were sent back to camp to bring water. Because the ground was bad and the beast was on the defensive, photography was difficult, but Kearton managed to catch small bits of action here and there, with Ulyate standing by him.

The day advanced and the dogs showed signs of tiring fast, yet the lioness still clung to the stronghold of the rocks. Every means at hand to drive her into the open had been tried time and again without avail. The task began to look hopeless. We had already reached the stage when we saw our resources coming to an end.

“Get a pole,” said the Colonel, “and we’ll poke a noose over her.”



BOUND AND MUZZLED

I n A f r i c a

"It won't work," said Loveless. "We've tried that often enough to show it won't work."

"Just the same we'll try it again," replied the Colonel.

Loveless had just started to hunt for the pole when, without warning, the beast gave a quick, savage snarl, scattered the dogs from in front of her, and, dropping down the face of the reef to the plain below, ran straight for the distant *donga*.

Old John led the chase, with the rest of the dogs trailing along as best they could, and behind them the men and horses, camera porters, *saises*, and dog-boys went scrambling down the rocks in pursuit.

On the bank of the *donga* the lioness stopped to fight the ropers. She had run far enough and meant business now, and the hunt came up and halted a

Lassoing Wild Animals

short distance away for a breathing spell.

The lioness had taken up her position at the end of a short tongue of land projecting into the *donga*, so that she was partially protected on three sides. The yelping dogs had quickly surrounded her, but she paid little heed to them now. Crouched by the side of a small thorn-bush, she watched every move of the horsemen preparing to advance.

Kearton mounted his camera at one side of the scene, selecting his position with care to obtain the best background and general composition. He shifted about two or three times before he was satisfied.

"Of course there's no telling which way she's going to jump," he explained. "But we might as well get the beginning of it right."

Means went first. Slowly he maneu-

In Africa

vered toward her for a chance to throw his rope, and the lioness, alert, opened her jaws and snarled at the horseman circling near.

Closer and closer Means approached. Then all at once she charged. Means wheeled and spurred his horse to escape. For the first thirty yards of the race the lioness gained rapidly. Then the bay began to gather headway and slowly forged ahead.

With a quick change of front the lioness turned and charged the Colonel, who was sitting on his horse near by. Again the lioness gained at first and again the horse drew away from her, and so, giving up the charge, she returned to another thorn-bush, where she crouched down low and snarled and growled as before. And all the while Kearton, on foot with his tripod, was busy taking pictures of the show.

Lassoing Wild Animals

This second position of hers gave the horsemen a better chance. There was now more room in which to get near her by a quick dash past the bush. While Means edged around on the northern side, the Colonel moved to the south, and by tossing his rope about and shouting he managed to attract and hold her attention. In fact, he nearly succeeded too well, for once she rose to the first spring of the charge and the Colonel half wheeled his horse for flight, but the beast sank back again and glared at him.

Then from behind her Means darted forward on the run, swinging his rope free round and round his head. Kear-ton began shouting.

“Wait — the camera’s jammed! Wait a bit — she’s jammed here!”

But there was no stopping then, and before the lioness knew what he was up

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to, Means dashed by within a few feet of her and roped her round the neck. But a lioness's neck is short and thick, and with a quick, catlike twist she slipped the noose over her ears.

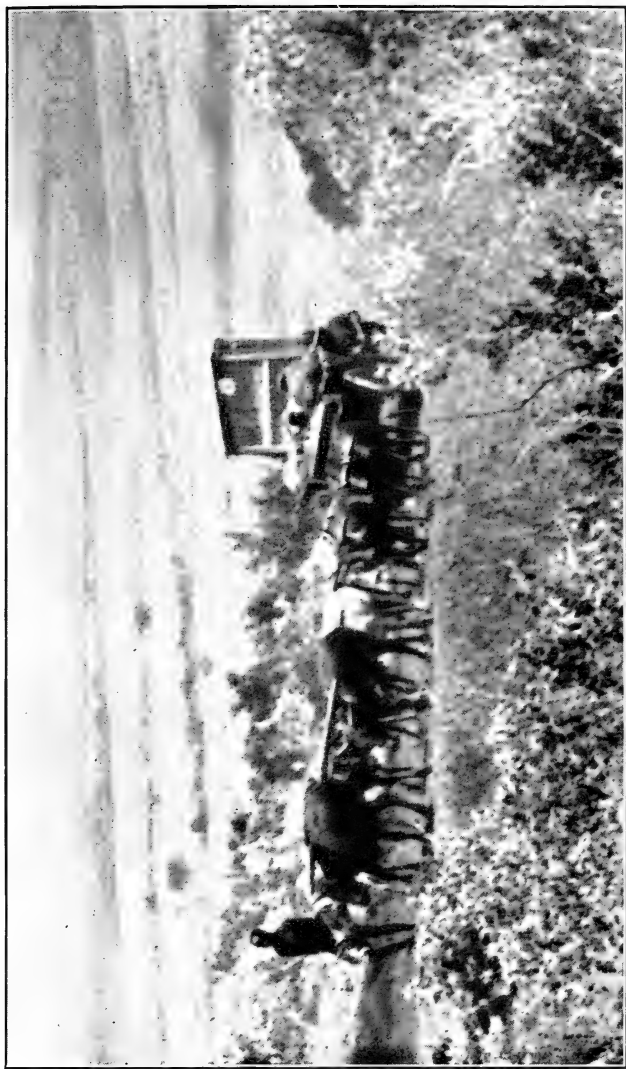
"Why can't they wait?" complained Kearton. "Somebody tell them to wait till I fix this. It's jammed. It must have got knocked on a rock somewhere. It never acted this way before." And all the while he talked his fingers were busy ripping out the jammed piece of film and loading up afresh.

When Kearton declared himself ready, Loveless, this time, had already taken up his position to the north. Again the Colonel waved his rope and shouted, and when the right moment came Loveless dashed past her and likewise roped her round the neck. Again the beast slipped the noose.

Here a rather strange thing happened.

Lassoing Wild Animals

We had been told on many occasions that in shooting lions the beast will give its attention to the man who has the rifle, as if the instinct of the animal told it which man to fear. Up to this moment the lioness had held off the horsemen easily, but no sooner had she freed herself from Loveless's rope than she fled into the *donga* and hid herself in a thicket of scrub and grass. For a time then it seemed that nothing would move her from out this scrub. The dogs were finished. Men and horses were becoming played out. Firecrackers and burning grass were used without result. Eventually the Colonel fastened a forked stick to his rope and dragged it across her hiding-place to uncover her. This maneuver partly succeeded — succeeded enough, at least, for Loveless to throw his rope at her. And at the sight of the rope coming toward her through the air



LEAVING HER HUNTING GROUND FOREVER

I n A f r i c a

she hurled herself at him like a flash, so that it was only the side jump of his horse that saved him; then she turned and broke away along the *donga*.

At once Means was after her, galloping hard, for without the dogs there was danger of our losing sight of her.

But the lioness did not run far. Her next and last position was in the bed of a small gully about three feet deep in the bottom of the *donga* and thickly grown with grasses. Here the ropers held a brief consultation and planned a final attempt.

Loveless made a throw and the noose landed fairly above the beast's head, but the thick grasses held it up. Loveless passed the other end of his rope over the branch of a near-by tree and down to the horn of his saddle.

The rest of us, with the cameras trained on the scene, had no knowledge

Lassoing Wild Animals

of the plan. We had not the slightest idea what the Colonel intended to do. Still wondering, we watched him procure a long pole and ride quietly along the edge of the ditch toward the place where the lioness crouched.

For a moment there was intense silence. The Colonel stopped his horse. Then, leaning over from his saddle, he poked the noose down through the grass.

With a roar the beast sprang at him — sprang through the loop — and at the other end of the rope Loveless yanked quickly and caught her by the last hind leg going through. Putting spurs to his horse, Loveless galloped away, hauling the lioness back across the gully and up into the tree, where she swung to and fro, dangling by the one hind foot and snapping upward at the rope she could not reach.

In Africa

“Got her!” yelled the Colonel. “Now the rains can come when they like.”

The beast was furious. She was still swinging head down like a pendulum, from the limb of the tree, and was tossing her body about in frantic endeavor to get loose. Means approached close and deftly slipped a noose over one of the wildly gyrating fore legs. Leading his rope over the branch of another tree, he stretched her out in a helpless position parallel with the ground.

“Now lower away on both lines,” said the Colonel.

He dismounted and stood beneath her, directing affairs as methodically as the foreman of a construction gang.

“Steady, Means — a little more, Loveless — now together — easy.”

She came within his reach and with a quick grab he caught and held her two hind legs with both hands while Kear-

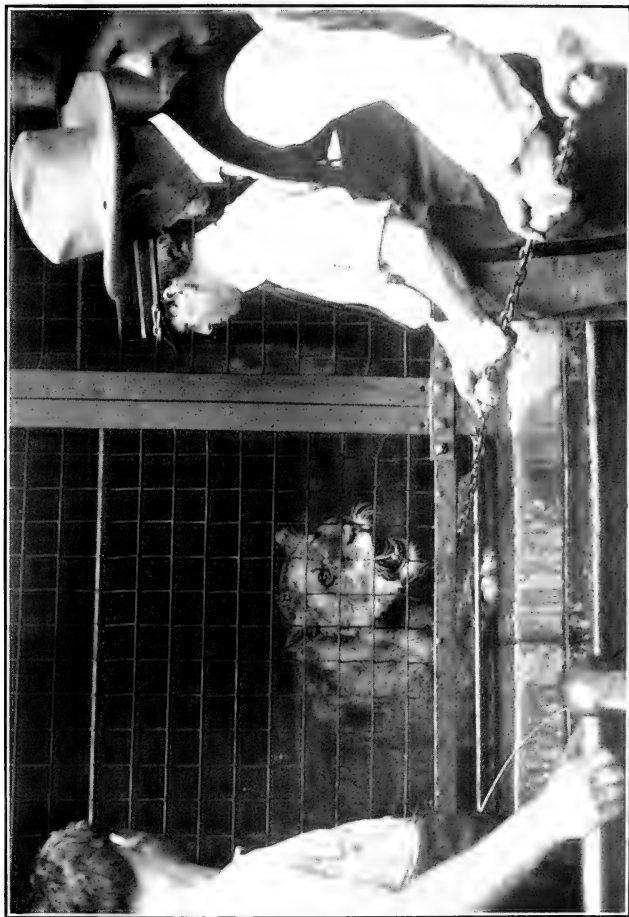
Lassoing Wild Animals

ton bound them together with a piece of light line.

The rest was easy. In less than five minutes she was bound securely and lowered all the way to the ground to rest in the shade.

It was nearly noon, and time to call a halt to let the heat of the day pass over before attempting to bring her back to camp. Porters were sent to fetch food and more water, horses were off-saddled and turned loose to graze, and one by one the dogs came straggling in.

The men stretched themselves out on the ground where a bush or a tree afforded some protection from the sun. But the Colonel kept wandering over to the prize, to examine a knot, to arrange a better shade, or to pour the last drops of water from his canteen into her open mouth. Once he stood over her for a



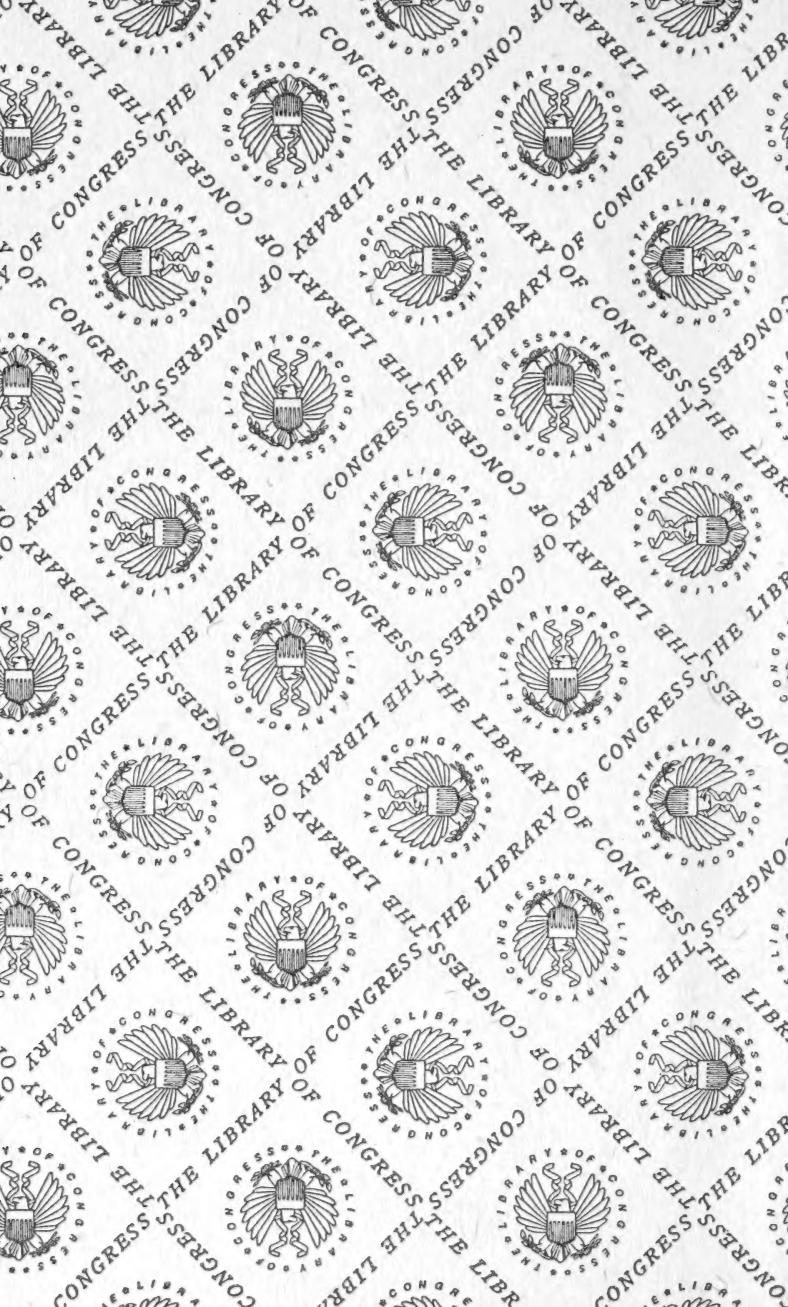
THE LIONESS AT HOME (BRONX PARK, NEW YORK) AS "A SOUVENIR OF THE TRIP"

In Africa

while, watching her vain attempts to cut the ropes with her teeth.

“Yes, you’re a beauty,” he finally said. “You’re certainly a beauty. I guess we’ll just have to take you home with us as a souvenir of the trip.”

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